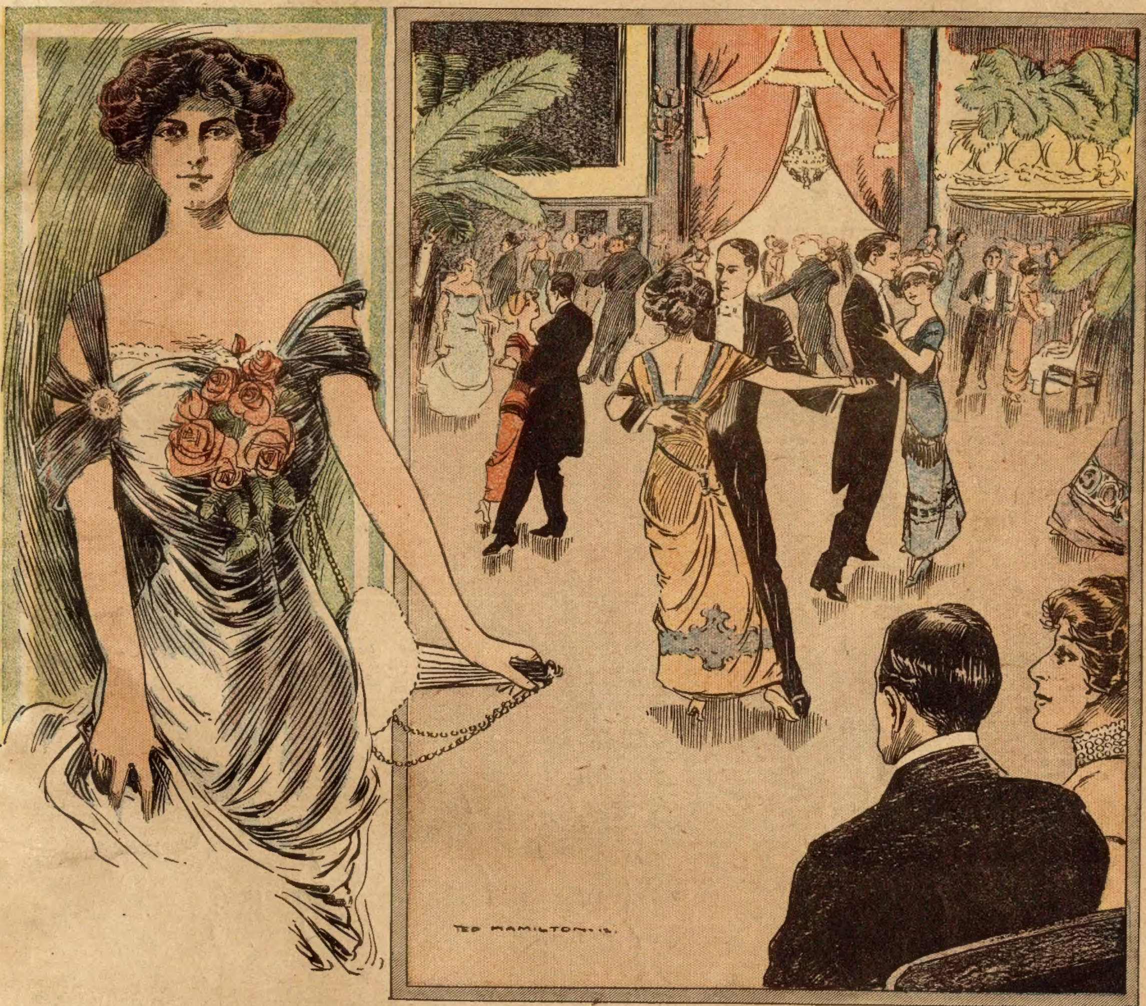
BOYCE'S MILLION A WEEK

CHICAGO LEDGER

VOL. XL. NO. 4. CHICAGO, ILL., SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 1912. SINGLE COPIES 5 CENTS.



The Blood-Stained Glove

A STORY OF THE SECRET SERVICE

By Granville Osborne

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CHAPTER I.

THE presence of an awning and of a stretch of red carpet outside one of the mansions in the exclusive part of Pennsylvania avenue, Washington, told passers-by what had already been announced in the society papers, namely that Mr. and Mrs. Lesley Hohenberg were giving a dance that evening.

The hostess was the loveliest woman in her ballroom. Her beautifully-shaped head, crowned with coils of deep-brown hair, was set regally upon her graceful shoulders; her brow was perfect; her eyes were of a warm hazel, fringed with long, black lashes, and her delicately cut nose and lips completed an almost flower-like loveliness.

Her only rival as far as looks went was a girl little known in society, although she had arrived at the house in the company of a lady whose very name was sufficient to open all doors to a protege of hers. Madge Wilmington, the girl in question, had not Mrs. Hohenberg's stately grace; but her complexion was that of a wild rose, and her eyes were as blue as the skies; hers was a face to trust once and for all, the face of one born to be a helper in the battle of life.

Madge was introduced to her hostess, and for the instant the blue eyes met and held the hazel, whilst, for no easily accountable reason, a gleam of what might have been merely liking, or might have been a vague recognition of the fact that somewhere they had met before, flashed between them. Then the brilliant crowd parted them, never to meet again until a grim tragedy had all but ruined one of their lives.

The blue-eyed girl had not lack of partners, one of whom at least appeared to think the three dances she gave him a most inadequate allowance. Brian Enderby, a brilliant young lawyer, declared by his friends to be a hardened old bachelor, was amused at his own eagerness to secure an "extra" and to induce his pretty partner to sit it out with him, on a deep window-seat shaded by palms, from which a view of the ballroom could be obtained.

"Mrs. Hohenberg is very lovely!" proclaimed Madge, after watching the dancers for some minutes.

Enderby glanced at her quickly with a half smile. Had he been a fool he would have suspected her of seeking to draw a contradiction from him, or at least a qualification of the statement; but, being clever, and seeing that the girl was speaking the truth from her heart, he said:

"Yes, she is one of the most beautiful women in Washington society. Pity she married a foreigner. Not that I know anything against Hohenberg; but a woman like that should have married an American."

"Which is Mr. Hohenberg?" asked Madge. "By the way, he is only 'Mr.' is he not??"

"Oddly enough for a German of distinction, he is simply 'Mr.' He looks as if he ought to have some military rank, but he declares that is only because of his one year's military training as a German subject. Mrs. Hohenberg was the daughter of the Winterhams, formerly our ambassador to Berlin, and there their daughter met and married Hohenberg. No one seems to have known much about him, but he was certainly received at court there, and he is undoubtedly very rich. The Winterhams are not wealthy, so I suppose they were glad enough to arrange the match. Still, it seemed a pity, and she was only twenty-two."

"And they have been married——"

"Five years. That is Mr. Hohenberg, the fair man crossing to speak to her."

Madge looked up quickly, and got a lightning impression of a man of iron. Very tall, well made, dressed with the utmost elegance, with the star of a great order glittering on his coat, Lesley Hohenberg looked a born autocrat over the lives and destinies of men and women.

Madge shivered slightly.

"You do not admire him?" asked her companion.

"He looks cruel," she said; "I think I am sorry for his wife. Is she happy?"

"Who knows?" replied Enderby, with a slight shrug of the shoulders. "She would not tell the world if she were not. But I knew her as a girl, and her face has changed. You appear to be interested."

"I was—I am. I have a touch of second sight, and I think I shall see a good deal more of Mrs. Hohenberg one day. There is a shadow behind her, very close indeed; she will want a friend. Did you know her well before her marriage?"

"Yes," said the man somberly.

Madge glanced at him quickly, and he, catching her eye, smiled.

"No, my dear lady, not that. You need not think of me as a blighted being. I liked her very much—she is my cousin—but I liked the man who adored her even better, my best and oldest chum."

"He loved her and lost her?"

"Yes. I can't understand the story even now. They were not formally engaged, for Frank had to wait to speak to her father until he was sure of promotion—he is in the navy. The promotion came, and he was a commander. Off he posted at once to Berlin to tell his news and to ask for Kate's hand. He heard instead from Winterham that she was that day bethrothed to Lesley Hohenberg."

"What did your friend do?"

"Took the next steamer back home."

"Without seeing her?"

"Naturally."

"I suppose it was natural to a man," said Madge; "but men can be very stupid sometimes. What is your friends' name besides Frank?"

"Dalrymple. Hello! I am afraid this looks very like a prowling partner of yours seeking for his lawful prey!"

Madge was duly claimed; Enderby watched her return to the ballroom and sighed a little.

"I like that girl," he said to himself. "She is the sort of human being one could bring one's self to marry; but then that is just the sort that won't marry unless it is for love, and I am getting old for love."

Brian Enderby had only just reached his fortieth year, but success after fifteen years of hard work made him forget that fact, and in fancy he invested his own dark hair with the gray of age.

The dance was over, and guests went out into the dawn of the morning. Tired servants turned off unnecessary lights and opened windows to let in the cool air, and then gladly retreated to their own quarters.

Kate Hohenberg stood alone in the ballroom, and the brightness faded from her eyes. It was the face of a man that had affected her so deeply, a face rarely seen since her marriage—that of Brian Enderby, the friend of the man whom she had loved with all her young heart—Frank Dalrymples' friend. She supposed that he, too, thought she had been faithless to Frank, since he so seldom came to her house and always avoided any lengthy conversation with her. No doubt Frank also thought her false, for she had never seen him or heard of him since she had become Hohenberg's wife. Well, it was a matter past mending; she must go on paying her father's debts, as she had paid them for five long years.

She moved toward the door. Although the dawn had swept the darkness from the sky, the house appeared full of heaped-up shadows. Mrs. Hohenberg placed her foot upon the first of the flight of stairs leading to her own room and then stood still, for a slight sound had caught her ear. The ballroom was on the ground floor of the house; it had swallowed up part of the little garden which had once given this town mansion a charm of its own. Mrs. Hohenberg's light footfall had made little sound as she crossed the hall covered with soft, silken Persian rugs; to all appearances the lower rooms were deserted by every one, but from a small room on her right she heard the jingle of keys.

The room to the right was her husband's study, a most jealously guarded sanctuary into which no one was permitted to penetrate. Here Lesley Hohenberg kept his books and papers, and here he frequently received visits from countrymen of his own, to whom he was vaguely understood to play the part of Providence. Hohenberg had given his servants strict orders that they were not to enter, even to dust the place, except on certain days for which their master was prepared, and on these days he saw to it that little remained unlocked to gratify any curiosity. Under ordinary circumstances, Mrs. Hohenberg would have concluded that her husband himself was in his study and have passed on to her own room; but for once her husband had condescended to give her some information about his movements. Shortly before midnight he had approached her, a smile on his lips, and had said in a low tone:

"Kindly keep on smiling and look mildly interested. I am going out. I have very important business. No one is to know that I have left the house. If any one asks for me say I have just gone into the garden or to the supperroom or anywhere you like. Look for me, but don't expect to find me, and don't let any one make any fuss. I shall not be back until late tomorrow afternoon." So it was not her husband who was now in that room searching the locked drawers of his bureau.

Kate paused for one instant. Should she call the servants? No; she was brave by nature, and felt inclined to deal with this intruder by himself. Some glimmering sense that there might be danger in the air made her glance quickly around the hall in which she stood. It was as much a museum as an entrance hall, for Lesley Hohenberg was an ardent collector of armor and weapons from all known countries of the world, ancient and modern. Some Indian weapons caught Kate's eye, and she drew softly from the wall an Indian creese—a knife of navy steel, with a firm grip, the sort of thing to give any opponent pause for reflection. She took off her right-hand glove in order to get a firmer purchase on the hilt, and then crept toward the door of her husband's study.

The door was shut, but Kate, with sudden movement, flung it wide open and stood, the picture of an indignant householder confronting a midnight marauder on the threshold.

The man in the room had not time to turn off the electric reading-lamp which he had taken to help him in his search, even if he had wished to do so. Nor would the precaution have availed him much, for the dawn was already lighting the room. He stood there, discovered, recognized. Kate made no sound loud enough to attract the attention of any one else in the house; the name she scarcely breathed aloud was—"Frank!"

CHAPTER II.

The intruder stood as if rooted to the spot, gazing at the apparition in the doorway. A singularly attractive-looking burglar in good truth. Commander Dalrymple was above the middle height and strongly made; his fair hair, although cropped close to his well-shaped head, still showed some inclination to curl, and a pair of the truest blue eyes in the world looked out from his sunburnt face. Some papers, which were in his hand fluttered to the floor, as he said in a voice low enough to be the echo of the one which had startled him—"Kate!"

"Frank, what does this mean? You are searching my husband's writing-table! You—you have no right to be here! I have never seen you since——"

"Since you broke my heart. Yes, you are right. I am here uninvited. I am here to do what is little less than a burglary; yet you must not hinder me and must not betray me."

"Must not?" she said, haughtily.

"No, must not. I command your help and your silence!"

"My duty is surely due to my husband?"

"There is another duty laid upon you, even holier and older—your duty to your country. In the name of the Union, I demand your help!"

Kate sank down on a leather-covered chair. What did it all mean? What half-formed suspicion that had lurked like a shadow in her brain began to take shape and to dominate her mind?

"What does my country ask of me?"

"Your absolute silence, that is all. You cannot be expected to take an active part in these proceedings; but you are an American woman, though you are the wife of a man in the secret service of Germany."

"A spy? My husband a spy!" she exclaimed, "I cannot believe it!"

"What would you call me, then?" asked Dalrymple. "There is no shame to him in it. He is a German by birth, and by feeling, and he is playing a part in that great national game which has the high seas for its scene and the empire of the world for its prize. Hohenberg is a vastly more important and far cleverer man than any one suspects; he is the chief of the German secret service in this country, and he does his duty to his Fatherland. It sounds cruel to say it to you, but I have little doubt that even his marriage was part of his official program. Married to an American lady of good birth, he had the entree into many official quarters, and could pick up valuable hints. At any rate, he is in the German, as I am in the American, secret service, and that is why I am here this morning."

"You are searching for papers?"

"Yes; some one has obtained from the war office certain secret plans for coast defense in case of invasion. They are of the utmost importance, giving details of the position of mine fields and of the manning and arming of forts and of the arrangements made for massing troops on the east coast. I have absolute knowledge that Hohenberg alone could have obtained these papers."

"But he has gone out on some mysterious errand—he will not be back until late this afternoon. He may have taken the papers with him."

"No he would be too careful to do that. He knows that we are watching him, and he guesses that at any time he might be arrested by a seemingly officious policeman on some absurd charge and searched. He will only show them to one man, and that is the head of his department on the coast; and he has probably sent for that man tonight."

He turned to the table once more, abruptly ordering Kate to watch the door. Even in the midst of her agitation she could not help feeling an additional stab of pain as she looked at Dalrymple's set face and noted that his voice had no tone of tenderness for her. He did not know, or care to know, how she had been tricked into a marriage she detested. Dalrymple drew out drawer after drawer of the writing-table, without result. Kate noticed that he wore a pair of thin kid gloves and that no finger print appeared upon the polished surface of the table. He raised himself from his stooping position and looked at his old sweetheart.

"There must be a secret drawer," he said. "Do you know it?"

"No, my husband does not like me to meddle with anything in this room. He brought the table with him from the old country."

Frank nodded. He commandeered her services as if she were a seaman serving under him. Kate came to the table, and the shaded electric light fell on her beautiful weary face and sad eyes. Dalrymple glanced at her once and then looked away; he had to put his mission first of all and dared not let anything divert his mind from his fixed purpose.

She looked at the table attentively, and said: "Are not its corners curious? They are blunted off, not rounded or pointed; you see the effect is the same all the way down—it may mean something."

She felt down the side of the heavy piece of furniture, without result. Frank hastily pulled out the middle drawer, which he had already examined, and passed his hand along the back of the framework of the bureau. Evidently his fingers encountered some spring, for with a slight jarring sound a piece of inlaid wood slid back into a socket revealing a whole nest of little drawers. He drew open the largest of these, and saw in an instant that his search was rewarded.

"You were right; they are here," he said, lifting out some tracings sketched on very thin paper. "Here they all are, the record of soundings, shoals, guns, mines, everything. Kate you have done your country a good turn."

"What are you going to do?" she asked breathlessly. "He must discover his loss directly he gets home. What will happen then?"

"He need not discover it. He has not had time to get much of this information by heart. I am going to take these, the genuine papers, and leave in their place a plan of defense which has been abandoned. It will be some time before he finds out the difference."

With the utmost speed the change was effected and the stolen papers stored away in Frank's breast-pocket.

"Now I must go," he said. "Kate, I wish it had been any one else in the world rather than your husband. Heaven knows I would not have done this willingly; but it is for home and country, and, I had to forget my private feelings. Do you forgive me?"

"For this? Oh, yes!"

"For this? Then how otherwise have I injured you?"

"I think you know," she said.

"I do not."

"How can I tell you, then? Did you ever think how the girl you knew years ago waited and watched for the promotion that was sure to come to you? And when it came earlier than she had dared to expect, the man never came, never sent, never wrote. He did not even answer the letter that girl wrote him in her despair, telling him that she was being forced into a loveless marriage. I think that girl has yet something to forgive."

"He never came?" repeated Frank. "Do you mean that, Kate?"

"You know that I do."

"I know that there has been vile treachery on some one's part. I came to you on the very day the news reached me that I was promoted. Your father himself told me that you had become bethrothed to a German, and begged me, almost with tears, not to cloud your perfect happiness."

"My father saw you?"

"Certainly. He was most kind, most sympathetic. He told me he would much have preferred an American son-in-law, but that he had made it a rule never to oppose you in any way."

Kate shivered, as if the chill of the morning had struck her.

"It is too late now at all events," she said. "And my father is dead and beyond my reproaches. But I was true to you all the time. I was not engaged to Lesley Hohenberg on that day, nor for many days after. I refused him again and again. I believed you would come. Only, at length, when you made no answer to my piteous appeal——"

"I never got it!" said Frank, savagely. "More diplomatic methods, I suppose."

"At length, since my father was far from rich, and Lesley Hohenberg, to whom he owed a large sum of money, had wealth in plenty, I allowed them to do what they liked with me."

"Your father is dead?" said Frank, slowly. "I am glad! I might have forgotten that he was your father. But Hohenberg lives——"

"And is my husband. I must not forget that, nor must you."

"Is he good to you? Are you happy?"

"I am his wife, and I can answer no questions about him. Go, Frank! If you are found here you will be in danger, and all your work will have been in vain. I must not see you again."

"Will you shake hands and say, 'I forgive you'?"

She laid her bare hand in his gloved one, and said: "I forgive, and pray Heaven to keep you safe."

"How can I best get out of the house?" asked Frank, letting her hand go, and turning once more to the thought of his mission. "I got in through the garden—it was easy enough in the darkness—and then through the conservatory into the ballroom, and when the coast was clear, I slipped in here; but I cannot go out that way."

"No, it would not be safe. But there is no one about downstairs. The best thing I can do is to let you out boldly through the front door. Then, even if any persons should see you, they will think you are the last guest to leave."

They went quietly into the hall, and Kate noiselessly let down the chain of the front door and drew one of the thick bolts back into its well-oiled socket. The little handle of the latch turned easily in her hand and the door stood open. Without another word or look, Frank slipped past her and stood outside in the soft morning light on the red carpet laid down for Hohenberg's guests.

He took one swift glance up and down the empty street. The Hohenberg house stood at a corner. With swift, light, unconcerned steps Frank traversed the few yards which lay between him and the turning, and had plunged down the side street.

The door was closed as silently as it had been opened, and Kate went upstairs to her own room. She had told her maid not to wait up for her, saying that she could easily manage to undress herself. There were tears upon her cheeks when she lay in bed to court a few hours' forgetfulness before beginning the duties of another day.

Just as she was falling asleep she had an impression that she heard some sound downstairs, and started up in a momentary panic. Had she forgotten to bolt the door? No, she remembered quite well that she had fastened everything as she had found it. The sound was not repeated. It might have been only an early riser amongst the housemaids, already setting about her work. The clock chimed five, and Kate slept.

CHAPTER III.

"Oh, Mrs. Hohenberg! My mistress, my poor mistress! You must wake up! There is dreadful news for you."

Kate, roused from a sleep of barely three hours, duration, awoke with a start. Parker, her faithful and discreet maid, stood by her bedside.

"What is it?" asked Kate, sleepily.

"Oh, lady, it is the master. He is very ill!"

Kate sprang out of bed and wrapped herself in an embroidered kimono, thrust her feet into slippers, and asked: "Where is he?"

(Continued on page twelve.)

Leading Ledger Story Next Week---

THE VANISHED BRIDE;

Or, The Mystic Profile

By Edyth Kirkwood

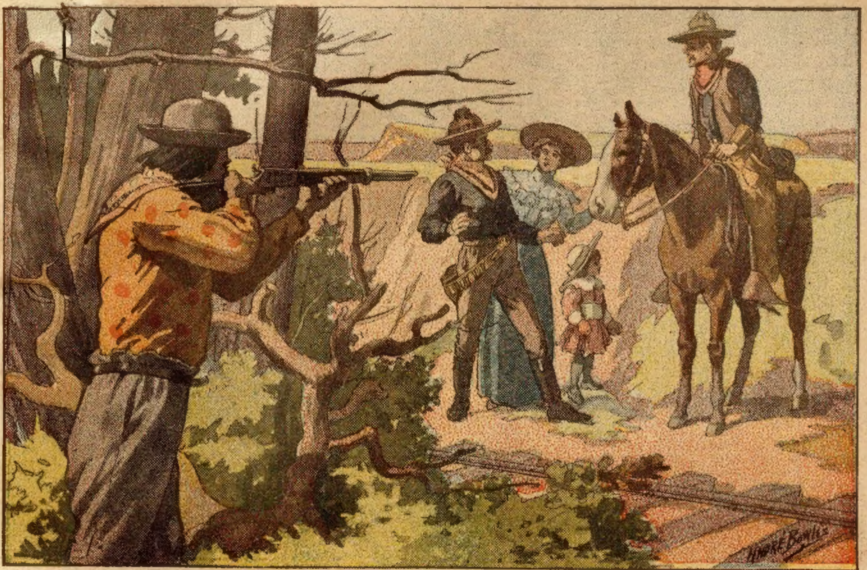
A MOST EXTRAORDINARY STORY

It is meant for your enjoyment. Don't let it get by you. Other fine things in that issue

Out West Stories

JIMMIE HAWKINS' RETURN

By PHILIP R. KELLAR



He was taking good aim.

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JIMMIE Hawkins, cowboy, waited patiently while his thirsty pony drank deeply at the trough in front of the Benson Hotel, waited patiently, but glanced furtively about. Six years had gone by since he had been in that part of the country, and in those six years many things might be forgotten—or remembered. He wondered if six years on the Nebraska ranges, added to a broad red scar across his cheek made by a Sioux bullet, and a big mustache, had changed him so his old acquaintances would not recognize him. He had thought so, when he finally decided to accompany the bunch of two-year-old steers from Nebraska down to Texas to the big P. J. ranch. Now that he had arrived he began to grow doubtful.

The proprietor came out and greeted him. Jimmie dismounted, leaving Flaxy with the bridle reins hanging over her head, and went into the hotel "office," one room answering the purpose of office, readingroom, bar and cardroom. Three cowboys sat at one of the tables playing cut-throat euchre. They looked up in mild interest and returned to their game. Jimmie recognized one as Red Martin, a red-headed giant who had been with the P. J. outfit in the old days. Martin's eyes gave no answering flash of recognition, and Jimmie breathed easier. Presently the landlord interrupted the card game.

"Hey, Red," he called, "here's a cowpuncher from Nebraska who wants to know if P. J. Thorney is a good man to work for."

Martin looked at Jimmie more closely. "Stranger?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Jimmie, "Dan Murphy, from Nebraska."

"Well," the giant answered quickly, "you might find a better man to work for if you'd travel all over, but I'd advise you not to waste time on the hunt. Looking for a job?"

"Might be," said Jimmie, guardedly. "Did he ever have any trouble with his men?"

"Nary a trouble," one of the others replied.

"Wrong," Martin interrupted. He introduced the two as Shorty Decker and Rube Simpson, and continued. "They've been here just a few months and don't know. Besides, it wasn't exactly with one of his own men that P. J. had the trouble."

Pressed by Decker and Simpson, Martin told the story.

"Well, you see, about eight years ago Colonel Thorney had a partner, a young chap named Jimmie Hawkins; a daisy cowpuncher, but hot in temper and quick on the trigger. They were getting on well, adding to their land and cattle every year. Jimmie wasn't old enough to vote when the Colonel took him in, but he was old enough to shoot straight, ride like hell, and rope a steer with the best of us.

"Then they started a school, importing a teacher from the East, and the serpent got into the game. Miss Lettie Anderson had all the boys sighing like furnaces over her in about three days, and Jimmie and Tod Brown got it awful bad. Even P. J. seemed to get caught. It wasn't long before Jimmie and Tod got to scrapping with each other, then they had an out-and-out quarrel, and the next week we find Tod dead out on the prairie near the foothills, shot through the back, the doctor said.

"Indians were bad about that time, and first we laid Tod's death to a stray party, but P. J. did some detective work with Sheriff Bill Henderson, and a week later Bill arrested Jimmie for the murder. We didn't believe he'd shoot a man in the back, and wanted him to prove himself innocent, but he got away from Henderson and disappeared. That's six years ago. There's been no trouble on the P. J. since then, though there'd sure be some if Jimmie Hawkins came back. He was either a fool, a coward, or guilty for running away, and he'd ought to be hung if he's either one of them things."

Neither by the twitch of a muscle nor an expression of his eye did Jimmie give a hint that he was the man Martin was talking about.

"Did—did the teacher care for Jimmie?" Decker asked.

"Shorty Decker," Martin retorted contemptously, "how in hell do you suppose I know what a woman thinks?"

"What'd they do with Jimmie's share in the ranch?" asked Jimmie.

"Never had any share, legally," Martin explained, "though everybody knew the Colonel expected to make him a full partner as soon as Jimmie got to be twenty-one, which would have been in four days after Tod got killed."

"Is Thorney married?" Jimmie seemed only slightly interested.

"Surest thing you know. Got the sweetest wife in Texas and the dandiest kid of a girl in the world. You just get little Lettie on your side, and you can have all the Colonel's got—and more besides."

"Did they ever find out anything more about who killed Brown?"

"Not a thing," Martin looked keenly at Jimmie. "What was the use of looking? Didn't Jimmie confess by running away?"

"Sometimes men run away for other reasons," Jimmie commented. "The P. J. ranch is a good place to work, then?"

"Best in the world—Dan Murphy."

Jimmie did not like the manner in which Martin looked at him as he spoke, and left them as quickly as possible without seeming to be in a hurry. A few minutes later, while in the washroom—a little hallway—Martin's voice came to him through the high window opening onto the office. The red-headed giant was speaking confidentially. Jimmie strained to hear.

"Yes," said Martin, "I've got a sneaking notion that this Dan Murphy is Jimmie Hawkins."

Jimmie crept to the wall and listened while Martin detailed his plans. He would get Sheriff Henderson's help—and divide the $5,000 reward still offered for Jimmie's capture. Martin left, after instructing the others to keep watch on the suspect. Jimmie went out through a rear door, crept to the corner of the building, watched until Martin disappeared down the street, and whistled softly for Flaxy. The pony responded. Jimmie led her quietly away, keeping in the rear of the hotel. When he reached the street, he sprang into the saddle and urged the pony to a gentle lope westward toward the P. J. ranch.

"I'm nineteen different kinds of a fool," he said to Flaxy, "for coming back down here. Of course she never cared anything for me, and took old P. J. as soon as I was out of it. I'll probably be the main attraction at a necktie party to pay for my damned curiosity." He urged the pony to a faster lope, patted her neck, and said more cheerfully, "Never mind, old girl, they haven't caught us yet. We'll make for the ranch, because they won't think we'd dare do that. If we can make the foothills, we'll bet ten to one they won't catch us before we get to the New Mexico line and safety."

The railroad, built during Jimmie's absence, bisected the P. J. property, passing a mile away from the home ranch, the narrow line running north a mile and then veering and skirting the edge of the foothills. Jimmie knew nothing of the railroad, but he knew the hills thoroughly, having been over every inch of them, hunting for lost cattle, hunting for Indian raiders, and being hunted by them. He remembered a natural cave, artfully hidden by nature, near the top of Pine Mountain, so-called because a lonely, gnarled old pine topped it. He would make for this, rest all night and the next day, and continue his way west at twilight.

Two miles from Benson he saw a little cloud of dust far to the rear. His field glasses enabled him to recognize Red Martin. The three others with him probably were Decker, Simpson, and the sheriff. At a depression in the road he stopped, dismounted, and crawled back until he could see over the ridge. The horsemen presently divided into two parties, one going to the north and the other southeast toward the railroad. He waited until they had gone far enough so they could not recognize him, mounted again, and pushed on.

Galloping rapidly up the other side of the little hill he almost ran into another horseman at the top. As they passed, Jimmie recognized the rider as an Indian from a little group of Apaches mixed with the more peaceful Cherokees in the western part of Indian Territory. The redman was dressed in white man's clothes. He was Tom Thunderface Johnson. Frequently, in the old days, Jimmie had seen him in that part of the country, the Indian occasionally coming to the P. J. ranch, apparently for no reason. As he had always behaved himself, however, nothing was thought of his presence. The last time Jimmie had seen him was the day before the killing of Tod Brown. The recollection brought a sharp tug at his heart. Then he pushed on and promptly forgot him.

Jimmie left the main road, and followed a little valley that afforded some protection, even though it headed more directly for the ranch and somewhat away from the route he had chosen to follow. He walked Flaxy to let her rest, but when presently he came on level ground again, he urged the pony into a steady lope. He was slightly startled on looking back to see that the Indian had stopped and was watching him closely.

The whistle of a train sounded in the distance. A few minutes later Jimmie saw its smoke as it bore down from the foothills. He was running almost parallel with the tracks, gradually drawing closer to them. Two hundred yards ahead the road turned and crossed the track, going towards the house. A trail kept on the north side, going toward the hills, and this trail Jimmie intended to follow.

He was looking along the trail, when a woman's shrill scream, followed by the deeper wail of a man in agony of fear, startled him. They were a hundred yards on the other side of the track, running frantically towards the crossing. Nearly to the track was a little girl, about five years old, running also. She reached the road, stopped in the middle of the track, when the warning whistle shrieked, and watched the oncoming train as if fascinated. The roar of the train drowned the cries of the man and woman, but Jimmie knew they were calling to the girl. He dug his spurs into the weary Flaxy, and as the pony bounded onto the track, checked her, leaned down, grabbed the girl about the waist, swung her up in front of him, and Flaxy staggered across. With a roaring screech the train sped by, the pilot just missing Flaxy's hind feet.

In their joy at recovering the girl from the jaws of death, the man and woman paid little attention to Jimmie. He recognized them as the girl's parents, also as Colonel Thorney and his wife, who had been Miss Lettie Anderson. He hoped they would not recognize him, and was turning Flaxy around to leave when Thorney sprang forward and caught his arm.

"I should say not!" he exclaimed, gruffly. "You can't come around saving my little Lettie from death, and then sneak off without hearing something from me. What's your name?"

"Dan Murphy," Jimmie replied glibly, keeping his face turned toward the hills. "I've got a long ways to go tonight. I didn't do anything, anyway."

"Except save our Lettie," the woman said softly, as she peered at the scarred side of Jimmie's face. "Haven't I seen you before somewhere?" she added, in a puzzled tone.

"Guess not." Jimmie twisted further around in the saddle. "So long."

A big negro woman came waddling down the road from the house, calling loudly: "Marse P. J.! Marse P. J.! Day's jes' telephoned from Benson dat Jimmie Hawkins in de neighborhood, tryin' to pass hisself off as Dan Murphy. De posse's out arter him now."

Jimmie involuntarily tightened the reins, but the Colonel's hand dropped heavily on the bridle near the bit.

"I knew it!" the woman exclaimed. "Jimmie!"

Jimmie turned and looked at them. He was caught. There was no use trying to escape. His curiosity, his insane desire to see the woman he had once loved, whom he still loved, even though she was another man's wife, had led him straight to the gallows. He looked doggedly defiant.

"Yes," he said, curtly, "I am Jimmie Hawkins. What are you going to do about it?"

"You saved my Little Lettie from death," the cattleman answered dully. "That more than pays for another human life you might have taken, in my eyes, but——" he hesitated, "but does it in the eyes of the law?"

"Patrick!" The woman spoke sharply. "You're not going to give Jimmie up. You're not, I say. You shall not!"

Jimmie, surprised at her passionate outburst, stared at her. He thought vaguely that Lettie Anderson had never been so beautiful as was this woman who was trying to save him. He thought it strange that one whom he had already mentally tabulated as heartless should show so much feeling. He gazed away toward the foothills. Backward the prairie stretched in a seemingly endless expanse of brown sea, for the grass had lost its early summer freshness and was ripening. His goal seemed an interminable distance away. The woman, impatient at the two silent men, clutched Jimmie's arm.

"Jimmie," her voice broke with little sobs, "you didn't do it? You never killed Tod? Say you didn't!"

(Continued on page twenty.)

THE QUEEN'S SIGNET;

Or, Lady Castlemain's Crime

By T. C. HARBAUGH

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Begun in No. 1, Jan. 6. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER XIII.

CAUGHT AT LAST.

IN ALL London there was no more distressed creature than Foy La Fonde after she made her escape from Temple House the night of Rosamond's arrest and incarceration in the Tower. Fearful of being hunted down by Lady Castlemain's minions and carried to prison because she had deserted the favorite, and with her secret troubling her, she knew not where to hide.

She dared not go back to the palace, for her flight had no doubt been discovered by her late mistress, and when she found herself in the dimly lighted streets she shuddered at the dark future that seemed to stretch before her. The distracted girl for some time wandered aimlessly about, avoiding the light as much as possible. She sought the wharves of the Thames, and for a while looked upon the dark waters as if they beckoned her from the ills that impended, but at last she turned away and disappeared.

Every person whom she met seemed a foe, and she hurried on and on until at length she paused at a narrow door in Cheapside. The house was a two-story affair with great shutters through which not a sign of light came, but Foy knew what was behind those heavy planks. At last she rapped lightly and was admitted.

She was conducted upstairs by the portress of the place, a swarthy-looking woman with an over-adornment of jewelry on her person, and when she had opened a door on the upper floor she turned suddenly upon the maid of honor.

"So you want to know your future?" she said, as she leered into Foy's face.

"No, no!" was the reply. "It is not for that I have come."

"You're a palace bird. I can see that," laughed the seeress. "They come to me now and then. I'll look at your hand, anyhow."

Foy's hand was seized by the fortune teller and she was dragged into the light. "It's a pretty hand," she went on, with a grimace. "But ah! the line of life is sadly broken."

The girl shuddered.

"I don't wonder that you don't want your fortune told. I wouldn't if I were you?"

"Why not, pray?" Foy managed to say.

"I see death, sudden death, in your hand."

It was with difficulty that Foy suppressed a shriek.

"I will not remain!" cried she. Better the streets of London than this house."

Madame Moll threw a swift glance toward the door and saw that it was bolted.

"Let me go!" pleaded Foy.

"Why did you come to me?"

"For shelter."

"But why not the palace?"

"I dare not go back there. I have been led into a snare, and am the keeper of a dreadful secret."

"Ha! I can see that," laughed the woman. "Why not sell it to Moll?"

Foy did not speak.

"I can buy, girl. I can cross your pretty hand with gold, and I can sell the secret perhaps to the King."

"Never!"

"To the Queen, then."

"No, no!"

Foy drew back and retreated to the opposite wall. Her face was white, and a quiver swept over her frame.

All at once Madame Moll approached her as the serpent approaches the bird it has inveigled into its strange snare. Foy felt herself falling under the influence of a mysterious power which she could not shake off. Her limbs seemed to give way beneath her, and she was lifted from the floor and deposited in a chair without resistance on her part.

She was under the hypnotic spell of this famous seeress who was dreaded by one-half of London and patronized by the other. Moll seated herself before the girl and passed her scrawny hands across her face. Foy was wholly in her power.

"Where are you now?" asked Madame Moll.

The girl's lips moved slowly.

"I am in Lady Castlemain's chambers," she answered like an automaton.

"What do you hear in her apartments?"

"She gives me the Queen's signet."

"For what purpose, my lady?"

"I am to lose it in Hyde Park."

"And why?"

"That some one may find it."

A smile of triumph overspread the face of the seeress of London.

"Where are you now?" she asked, after a pause.

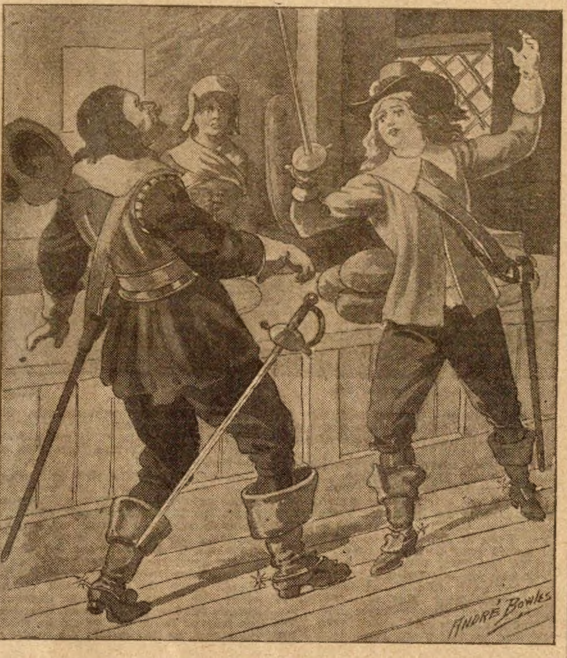
"I am back in the palace."

"Without the signet?"

"Yes, without it."

Some time afterward Foy opened her eyes, feeling weak in every part of her body. She was lying on a cot in a semi-darkened room, and the place was strange to her. By degrees she remembered entering the house of mystery, and gradually the last strange acts of its mistress came back to her.

She got upon her feet and tried the door. It was not locked. Down the stairway which was before her she went, trembling and holding her breath from very fear. At the foot of the flight she came in contact with the fortune teller. Madame Moll did not impede her progress, and Foy, opening the door which led into the street, stole forth, and when on the pave ran as fast as her limbs could carry her. She narrowly eluded a trainband which was abroad with lights, and cowered amid some shadows till it had passed without seeing her.



The man dropped his sword.

What had happened in Moll's house after her senses had departed she did not know. Had she surrendered her secret to the old hag, and was the losing of it to bring about that sudden death which she professed to see in her palm?

The maid of honor was crossing a street when a figure rose before her, The girl uttered a cry and started back.

"You?" exclaimed the man, who stopped and looked into her face. "This is not the palace, girl?"

Foy could not speak for a moment.

"If it were, I should quit it at once," she said at length. "Do you know what has happened? Rosamond is in the Tower."

Noel Neville gripped Foy's arm and drew her to the pave and in the shadow of the houses.

"I know," said he in a strange voice. "This is surely a night of adventure. I have fought with the King, and but for the coming of Buckingham, who drew his majesty aside, I might now be in the Tower myself. The King was hurried off for some purpose just when he was about to question me, and I took to my heels," and Noel ended with a little laugh.

"You fought the King?" cried Foy, turning pale. "Why should you cross swords with his majesty?"

"He was masked, and I did not know with whom I was fighting till I had unsworded him. Heavens, girl! but I might have deprived England of a ruler."

"It is well you did not," replied Foy.

"Now," continued Noel, "cannot you finish your secret which you but half told in St. James' Park? Who commanded you to lose the Queen's signet in Hyde Park?"

Foy shuddered and seemed to retreat within herself.

"Come," insisted Rosamond's lover. "I will keep it so far as it is well for all of us—you, Rosamond, and myself. Who sent the ring to the park by you?"

"Lady Castlemain."

"Ha! I thought as much. That serpent bites like the adder she is. Harle the Hawk found the ring and I despoiled him. The Red Duchess has trapped

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* * *

Where to Find the Men.

"You may say what you will," said the lady, "but I think that you will find women less wicked than men. I confidently expect that Heaven will be inhabited principally by women."

"Very likely," answered the man. "The men will be found, as usual, in the smokingroom on the floor below."

* * *

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ond, and I am hunted by her as."

l no one save the Queen from her ?"

is not friendless!" exclaimed feeling his blood stir once more in ns. "I wish now I had not run away he King, but had told him all be- uckingham came upon us. You a home in Holborn Square."

f it compromises you, Noel."

ll not compromise me. I have and young Neville laid his ilt of his sword.

ogether from the spot and le square, at one side of held a group of men around hich appeared a placard at re gazing by the light of a

re," whispered Noel, re- hand. "I would see what ave found."

away, watched by the girl, w him pause on the fringe of crowd. In a minute he came back ith a smile on his face.

"The dogs want to pick up the scent," said he, as he paused in front of Foy. "One hundred pounds reward for one Noel Neville who is accurately described on the poster."

Before Foy could reply a door behind them opened, and half a dozen armed men rushed forth. Noel whirled with a cry and drew his sword, but it was dashed from his hand, and he was pinioned by a dozen arms. Foy fled with a shuddering exclamation. She knew what had happened, for the varlets who held Noel wore the livery of Buckingham!

CHAPTER XIV.

KING AND FAVORITE.

Charles the Second, King, "by the grace of God and Buckingham," as the wits used to say, was pacing the floor of his private apartments in Whitehall Palace. Now and then he glanced at a fair, almost girlish-faced youth, whose auburn curls fell in true cavalier style over his shoulders. This person was Reginald Sussex, his private scrivener.

It was the afternoon after his adventure with Noel in the park, a contest followed by the sudden appearance of Buckingham, who had dragged him from the scene before he could interrogate his adversary.

"Reginald," abruptly said Charles, pausing in his pacings, "what sort of gossip do you pick up in your idle hours?"

The young secretary poised his pen over the sheet of parchment and looked up at the King.

"I pick up but little, your majesty," he replied.

"You frequent the playgrounds, my boy?"

"At times, sir."

Charles came up to the table and rested one hand lightly upon it. There was a troubled look in the eyes of his majesty.

"What is this I hear about the arrest of Mistress Temple of Temple House?"

"I have heard but the merest rumors of such an occurrence."

"And you know nothing beyond reports?"

"Nothing, your majesty."

Charles walked away and stood at an oriel window with his back turned toward young Reginald.

"Boy," he exclaimed, suddenly turning on his heel, "please to look at the signed orders of arrest in the proper drawer."

The youth opened a drawer in the table, and ran his hands through a lot of papers there.

"How many?" inquired the King.

"Nineteen, your majesty."

"Are they numbered consecutively, lad?"

"Nay, there are four missing."

Charles thoughtfully passed his hand over his forehead.

"I see," he said but half aloud. "I must have given the missing ones to Lady Castlemain."

His brow clouded more than ever.

"Go to the Tower, boy," said he, "and ask the lieutenant thereof if Mistress Temple has been consigned to it and by what authority. I will await you here."

Reginald rose and took his departure.

"The web seems to be contracting!" exclaimed the King, as the door closed behind the youth. "No one enters the Tower save by a warrant signed by me. I have issued none for the arrest of Mistress Temple, whose father was my father's friend. Ah, the cunning of these jealous women! They keep me in a stew all the time. If Buckingham had not taken me away last night I might have learned where Noel Neville got the Queen's signet. Why did the Duke make himself so officious? There was method in his madness. And then, there is gossip that the Duchess of Cleveland has lost one of her maids of honor, the girl Foy, who slipped through my hands when I was asking her about my consort's ring. By my grace! I must find this lass. I must also find Neville, and I shall get at the bottom of the signet plot."

He lapsed into silence, and was toying with one of his favorite spaniels when the door opened and Reginald reappeared. The youth advanced and drew a paper from his pocket, which he opened before Charles.

"God's mercy! it is true!" cried the King, with a start. "She has been committed to the Tower—the chud of my father's friend. This is infamous!"

The King's lips curled in anger. He picked up the paper and thrust it angrily into his pocket. Then, without more ado, he tramped from the room, and Reginald bent over his work with a smile on his face.

Lady Castlemain's chambers were on the other side of the palace, and she had just finished her toilet when the door was burst open and Charles stood before her. She must have seen at a glance that the King was displeased for there still lingered on his countenance the angry look which had come there in the scene between his secretary and himself.

Without a word Charles drew forth the paper which he had brought with him and handed it to Arabella, whose face at sight of it lost some of its color.

"What means this?" he inquired. "Who placed this order of arrest in the hand of my guard?"

A look of defiance flashed up in the favorite's eyes.

"I did, your majesty."

"Not with my consent," said Charles.

"Your majesty knows that I would do nothing that was not for the good of the realm."

"What is Mistress Temple's crime?"

"She is in league with one who has played a hand against the Queen."

This answer, coming from a woman who hated every hair of Catherine's head, caused a smile to settle on the King's face.

"Who is this person who is playing against the Queen?" he asked.

"One Noel Neville."

"What has he done?"

"He has refused to say where he found the Queen's signet. When the guard attempted to arrest him he was secreted by Mistress Rosamond Temple, who aided him in escaping."

"And when you found one bird flown you arrested the other?"

"I did, your majesty."

Again Charles' face grew dark.

"Madame," he said, and never before had he addressed Lady Castlemain with such sternness, "I will not submit to this. Know you that Mistress Temple is the child of Sir Roger, who fought my father's battles for him, and because he did so was sent to the block by the usurper, Cromwell? What must she think when she finds herself in the Tower by an order signed by me? Will she not call her King the most ungrateful man on earth?"

Lady Castlemain, who more than once had seen the King in a passion, was silent. She threw the warrant upon the table and looked into Charles' eyes.

"What do you know about the loss of the Queen's signet?" suddenly demanded the King.

"What should I know?" was the answer. "Have I nothing to do but to keep track of her majesty's trysts?"

It was a bold move. The beautiful woman, driven to the wall, was playing the boldest hand against the Queen she had ever played. Her belief that the King dared not turn against her was her bulwark, and she had tried him in many ways, always to conquer.

"The Queen's trysts, say you?" cried Charles, stamping his foot. "Do you mean to tell me that Catherine of Braganza lost her signet where she, as the consort royal, had no right to be?"

"Where did she lose it?" bantered Lady Castlemain.

Charles, hit hard, was nonplused.

"She affirms that it must have been taken from her private apartments," said he.

"By whom?"

A smile of incredulity overspread the woman's face as she spoke, and she seemed to draw her figure to the true height of her proud, imposing stature.

"I must believe the Queen," Charles answered. "Ever since our bridal she has been circumspect in all things. Catherine's character cannot be assailed, and it comes with ill grace from you, madame, to speak a word against her purity."

White as driven snow went the face of the creature upon whose ears these words fell in biting accents. Her hands shut till the pink nails seemed to cut into the flesh like a surgeon's lancet.

"No more!" suddenly exclaimed the King. "I shall release Mistress Temple, and what is more, I shall go to the bottom of the signet mystery."

"Does your majesty connect me with it?" came the hot demand.

"I shall find out everything, and woe to the persons who have had a hand in the matter!"

'Ask Noel Neville!" cried Lady Castlemain. "Ask him where he found the signet. May it not be a secret between him and Queen Catherine? She goes into the parks, as your majesty knows; she goes en masque at times. Must all her secrets be your majesty's?"

"Madame!" cried Charles, as he stepped back, "all shall be found out. If you or any one connected with the court has had a hand in this thing, the royal displeasure shall fall like a thunderbolt."

"That is tantamount to accusation,' flashed the pallid woman. "I have no desire to serve your majesty longer if I have fallen under suspicion. But let me say, Charles Stuart, that, if dismissed, I can make a living by the sale of your letters."

This was a threat which she always held over the King's head, and it had always had its effect.

"Rest assured, madame, that only the guilty shall be punished," he answered, mildly, and when he left her presence the Red Duchess caught up the order of arrest and tore it into a thousand fragments.

"Ho! my royal tiger!" she exclaimed. "The old threat always cools your blood. Release the bird from the Tower, if you will, but Noel Neville has passed beyond your hands forever!"

CHATER XV.

A DANGEROUS ENTERPRISE.

With a lighter heart than she had known for hours, Rosamond found herself back in Temple House. She had been freed from the Tower in a manner that was most strange to her, though she suspected that the royal hand had interfered in her behalf.

What had become of Noel she did not know. She feared, despite her liberation, that she was not yet beyond the designs of Lady Castlemain, but at the same time she determined not to bow to that imperious beauty and to keep out of her snares.

If she could have passed the dark precincts of a certain building which overlooked the Thames, her anxiety for Noel's safety would have increased. Of course she was not aware of his arrest by Buckingham's minions, for she had seen nothing of Foy since her escape from the Tower. Lady Castlemain's maid of honor seemed to have vanished into the unknown, and Rosamond soon ceased to think of her.

There was no more dreaded prison in all London than the one which stood on Princess Walk. It was built by Edward the Confessor, and if its inner history could have been known, all men would have shuddered at the recital. It had dungeons innumerable. Those who passed its portals might well leave hope behind. Few ever came out of the place alive, and it was more feared than the Tower.

In one of the lower dungeons of this terrible place a man was leaning against a damp wall. Not a ray of light penetrated to the cell, and he could not see his hand before his face.

Noel had been conducted to the prison by Buckingham's men, after his capture in the street when his companion was Foy La Fonde. He was well aware that Buckingham's minions had seized him, and had he not been overpowered before he could lift a hand, he would have shown them how a Neville could defend himself.

His prison was a cramped place with a high ceiling and a moist floor of flags. Not an article of furniture was in the place, and he was obliged to stand to prevent soiling his raiment. To his surprise his sword had not been taken from him, but this was easily accounted for on the ground that his enemies were so sure of keeping him where he was that it was not necessary to deprive him of his weapons.

There was no use to try the door, which was of solid iron, and for hours after it had clanged upon him he could hear the sound in his ears. He was tasting the vengeance of the Red Duchess. That Buckingham was her tool he well knew, and the thought sent his blood hot through his veins. With Rosamond in the Tower and himself in merciless durance, the future presented no ray of hope.

There was no accounting of time, for his dungeon was without light, but he could hear the sound of the river, and judged that he was not far from it.

When the end would come he dared not conjecture. Yet he waited, sword in hand, for the opening of the door, that he might plunge it into the body of his guard and make a break for freedom.

What, therefore, could he hope for? At one time he thought that Foy might spread abroad his capture, but who would befriend him against the power of the King's favorites?

At length he heard the iron key turn in the trusty lock. Noel drew back and made ready for a spring. The portal did not open far, and something fell at his feet. Then the door closed again, and the key grated as before.

Amid the stillness that followed he stooped and picked up the object that had been thrown into the cell. It proved to be a bit of food, but Noel cast it from him, for the powers that had shut him up in that dismal place would not hesitate to poison him.

Meantime, Foy, who had fled upon Noel's arrest, had almost stumbled upon one man she knew, having seen him at a garden fete once held in St. James' Park by the maids of honor. This was

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Peculiar After Effects of Grip This Year.

Leaves Kidneys In Weakened Condition

Doctors in all parts of the country have been kept busy with the epidemic of grip which has visited so many homes. The symptoms of grip this year are very distressing and leave the system in a run down condition, particularly the kidneys which seem to suffer most, as every victim complains of lame back and urinary troubles which should not be neglected, as these danger signals often lead to more serious sickness, such as dreaded Bright's Disease. Local druggists report a large sale on Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root which so many people say soon heals and strengthens the kidneys after an attack of grip. Swamp-Root is a great kidney, liver and bladder remedy, and, being an herbal compound, has a gentle healing effect on the kidneys, which is almost immediately noticed by those who try it. Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., offer to send a sample bottle of Swamp-Root, free by mail, to every sufferer who requests it. A trial will convince any one who may be in need of it. Regular size bottles 50cts. and $1.00. For sale at all druggists. Be sure to mention this paper.

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no less a personage than the renowned Captain Jovis Brass. He had been pointed out to her by one of her companions, with the remark that the Captain had once insulted Lady Castlemain in her calash, and had not been punished by the King, who regarded his act as a joke on his insistent favorite.

Foy watched the man some time before she ventured to approach him. He was reading one of the placards for Noel's arrest, and she drew near enough to hear the sarcastic laugh which fell from his lips.

The first intimation Captain Brass had of the girl's presence was her hand on his wide sleeve, and when he turned he leered into her face in admiration of her beauty.

"Ho!" he cried. Meseems you wish acquaintance with as gallant a man as ever trod the streets of London."

"I do," replied Foy boldly. "You are Captain Jovis Brass?"

"I am none other, thank fortune," said the swaggering gallant. "I am a son of merry fortune who carries his big heart on his velvet sleeve and the best sword of London on his thigh."

"You look it," answered the girl, with an alluring smile. "You have been reading the reward for Noel Neville's arrest."

"That I have, and it will be a cold day when they trap the young fellow."

"Alas! he is already in the toils."

"What!" cried Brass, recoiling and fixing his bulging eyes again upon Foy. "Do you tell me that my friend Noel, whom I rescued from the clutches of Captain Pawn and his varlets, has been caught like a rat in a trap?"

"I do."

"Not here, girl," and the Captain seized Foy's arm and dragged her away.

"Now tell me," he went on, a moment later, when he had pulled her into a secluded place. "How came it about?"

Foy proceeded, and in as few words as possible narrated the story of Noel's apprehension. She had a silent auditor in Brass till the last sentence had passed her lips.

"They did not go toward the Tower, eh?" cried the Captain. "You say you followed them into Princess Walk?"

"I dogged their steps into that quarter," replied the girl. "I was determined to see whither they took him."

"You're worth your weight in sovereigns!" cried the doughty Captain. "It is not difficult to tell where my friend Noel is at this moment. You have heard of the Black Pile, my girl?"

"If you mean King Edward's prison—"

"I mean nothing less," interrupted the swashbuckler. "He's there at this moment, God pity him!"

Foy felt her cheek grow pale.

"Is there no hope?" she cried, clutching her companion's arm.

"Hardly a ray," was the reply. "But wait. Give me time to get the whole matter through my brain. I've got it now. I feel like kissing you for your information. There, girl, you can go now."

She did not want to leave Captain Brass without the promise of Noel's freedom, but he was chary in giving it, and she was obliged to depart without it. Captain Brass went away to turn up in the Lion and Stag, where he took a seat at a table in one of the little back rooms, and drank his sack.

"It's a good thing I have an appointment with Harle here!" he exclaimed. "In the Black Pile, eh? Caught by Buckingham's rascals? That means that my Lady Castlemain is pulling the string."

At this juncture the door opened, and a person who looked quite unlike Harle the Hawk made his appearance. He came over to the Captain's table and sat down.

"What do you think?" cried the highwayman. "My Lord Buckingham tried to take the necklace from Rosalind."

"The scoundrel!" ejaculated Brass.

"The velveted villain!" cried Harle. "But you have somthing on your mind my dear Captain."

"That I have, Harle. Our friend Neville has taken other quarters."

"Where he can keep out of danger, no doubt."

"Where he is in the peril of his life," was the reply.

Thereupon the Captain retold Foy's story, listened to by the knight of the road in dead silence.

"It's a net that generally holds," said Harle, with a smile. "I've robbed about everything but the Black Pile."

"Is it proof against you?"

"I—don't—know," drawled Harle. "Whoever got out of it alive?"

"You must not ask me such unanswerable questions," was the response. "If you and I, Harle, cannot force the doors of King Edward's trap, who can?"

Harle leaned back in his chair and his face became a study.

"It's a greater undertaking than filching Lady Castlemain's necklace or robbing the Earl of Lancaster of his gold snuffbox."

"Vastly greater," coincided the Captain.

The Hawk drained his pewter mug, and his face cleared.

"If we win it's a victory over the Red Duchess; if we lose it's Tyburn tree!" he laughed.

"And the tree could bear no better fruit," chuckled Captain Brass.

"Come, then!" cried Harle, rising. "We'll risk the noose for the merriest venture of our lives!" and they left the place together.

CHAPTER XVI.

FOY PLAYS THE GALLANT.

When Foy La Fonde left Captain Brass she was overcome with a fear which she could not shake off. She was certain that the vengeance of the Red Duchess would pursue her, for did she not know Arabella's secret concerning the Queen's signet?

Before she had gone far she dropped into a costumer's shop which was patronized by the attaches of the royal court, and selected a full suit of men's clothes, sword and all. She emerged from the place in the disguise of a young gallant, and it would have taken the sharpest eyes to detect the change. Thus equipped, Foy felt more at ease, and after passing a number of people who did not suspect, she smiled to herself and became bolder.

Not long afterward she turned up near Temple House, and seeing a light inside, she wondered if Rosamond had escaped from the Tower. To summon some one to the door was the work of a moment, and to her surprise it was Rosamond whom she beheld.

Noel's love stared at the prim-looking person at the door, her eyes opening to their widest capacity, and she did not suspect the cheat till Foy's laugh rang merrily out.

"If your sharp eyes are deceived, I think I am safe," she exclaimed.

It was the voice that betrayed the maid of honor.

"So you are out of durance?" said Foy, as she turned upon Rosamond in the parlor. "Who opened the doors of the Tower to you?"

"The King, I suppose," was the reply.

"Then you are more fortunate than Noel."

Foy regretted her words the moment they had left her tongue, for Rosamond started and turned white.

"What has happened to Noel?" she cried.

"Do not despair, Rosamond. I am sure I have sent him a friend," the maid of honor hastened to say. "What if he is in King Edward's prison? There are strong and good hands outside."

Not until Foy had told her story of Noel's arrest by Buckingham's men did the beauty of Temple House speak again.

"It looks dark enough for Noel," said she. "Certainly his majesty does not know of his peril."

"Let the King remain in ignorance thereof for a time. Let Captain Brass first do what he can."

"But alone he can effect nothing. The doors of the Black Pile are iron and guarded."

"I fancy the Captain knows how to force even iron doors," Foy answered, reassuringly. "He may have an ally."

"But you?" and Rosamond surveyed Foy's garb, noting how fair she was in masculine attire. You look like a sworded gallant who is looking for a love affair, or, better still, for a tilt with a rapier."

"I prefer the latter," cried Foy. "You must not forget that we court ladies take lessons in swordmanship. I am quite an adept with the rapier, and this one seems a jolly good blade."

"Verily it looks like it," and suiting action to her words, Rosamond unsheathed Foy's sword and tested its mettle.

"I selected this disguise," continued Foy, "because I fear the Red Duchess will put her hounds on my track, seeing that I am the possessor of her secret. No doubt she fears I may fall into the hands of the King, who will be sure to question me, for, despite his adoration for Lady Castlemain, he hath a real affection for the Queen."

It was midnight before the two girls parted. Foy announced that she would return to the old quarters which she knew before her beauty secured her a place in the palace, and promising to be careful, Rosamond saw her depart.

With a lighter heart than she had known since her escape from Whitehall, Foy tripped through the streets, now and then pausing to peep into the coffee houses where the gay men of London were making merry with sack and gossip. Fear seemed to have left her, and her boldness became more emphatic each succeeding moment.

"Come!" suddenly cried a voice behind her. "You won't find the missing bird in there."

There was something in the tones that sent a thrill through the girl's frame. She dared not look round, but as she was jostled by an arm, she turned and beheld Captain Pawn of the King's guard. Their eyes met instantly.

"What ho!" cried the Captain. "Are you short of sovereigns in your purse that you can do nothing but look and envy?"

Foy tossed her head haughtily.

"I do not have to throw my coins on the sack tables," she said, returning the look with interest. "That is for men of your stamp."

The next moment she turned on her heel and made off.

"Look how the young fellow uses his feet!" she heard some one say behind her. "Methinks, Captain, those feet would look better in dancing slippers than in yellow boots."

The girl's heart rose instantly into her throat. Evidently Captain Pawn and his dastardly men were looking for her.

She quickened her steps. Not far off was the mouth of an alley as dark as the caverns of Egypt, and caring little where it led so it promised escape, Foy darted into it and ran like a deer. Heavy footsteps rattled behind her with the jingling of swords, and she knew that she had the posse at her heels.

There were no areas into which she could dart, and in truth, she did not know where she was.

"Don't let the cheat escape!" roared out Captain Pawn. "Who knows but we may have found our bird sailing under false colors? On, men, on! Our lady of the palace pays well for nice feathers just now."

Poor Foy laid her hand on her sword to still its sound and kept resolutely on. If she could only elude her hunters she would go back to Rosamond's and hide there. What a fool she was to quit the haven of safety, and as she ran she saw what a terrible mistake she had made.

If the King was hunting her it would not have been so bad, for she would be protected if she told his majesty the truth, but to have Lady Castlemain's minions at her heels was the acme of peril.

When she emerged from the alley she perceived a lighted bakery window and a woman in the open doorway. Foy darted thither, and running past the dame, turned suddenly upon her.

"Hide me, in the King's name!" she cried, as the woman whirled upon her with a mad epithet. "You have a back room? Quick! the fiends are on my heels!"

Already she heard the miscreants on the pave. In another moment they darted past the shop, Captain Pawn in the lead, and she breathed freer. But they might come back and search the shop!

"Who are you?" demanded the woman, seizing Foy's arm. "By my troth! you wear a man's clothes, but you have a girl's eyes. Hist! some one is coming back."

Foy shut her teeth hard and leaned against the counter. The door which the shopkeeper had closed was burst open, and one of her pursuers made his appearance. The woman, who was a portly dame, attempted to shield Foy's slender figure, but the man's eyes were too sharp.

"Ah! I have the bird in velvet!" he exclaimed, as he rushed forward.

Foy pushed her protector aside, and stepping into the light, drew her rapier.

"Ho! will my bird fight Clovis Pinch?" laughed the big fellow. "I don't want to ruffle your feathers. My Lady Castlemain will do that to the King's taste when she has you well caged. I can well vouch for that."

There was no answer by Foy, who stood on the defensive with her blade thrown forward and her eye singling out a button on the man's breast. She saw that the sword he carried was heavier than hers, but it is not always weight that carries the day. More often it is skill and coolness, and she remembered how she had bested the Duke of York, the King's brother, in a merry bout on the castle green.

Clovis Pinch was sure of his strength. With a cry he sprang forward, but the following moment he discovered that he had before him one who was no novice with the steel.

Foy fenced with the skill of an expert. She avoided all his sword plays, and turned aside the point of his blade when it was bearing down upon her throat. All at once by a dexterous twist of her agile wrist she swept Master Pinch's blade aside, and before he could recover she had buried her rapier just below the button.

The man dropped his sword and reeled backward with a wild cry. The shopwoman shrieked. Foy looked at her victim writhing on the floor, and darted toward the end of the room.

"Straight through the door!" cried the shopkeeper. "Over the fence at the end of the garden, and may God help you!"

Foy heard these words but did not pause. The narrow door flew open when she pressed the latch, and almost as quick as thought she was in the open. Down through the garden she ran, noting the walk which led on, and at last, clambering over a lew fence of staves, she landed in another alley.

"I had to spit the big brute!" she cried to herself. "It was either his life or the dungeons of the Red Duchess!"

She still held the naked rapier in her hand, but when she sheathed it some squares from the scene, she saw that it was flecked with little gouts of red.

The conclusion of this interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss.

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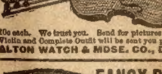

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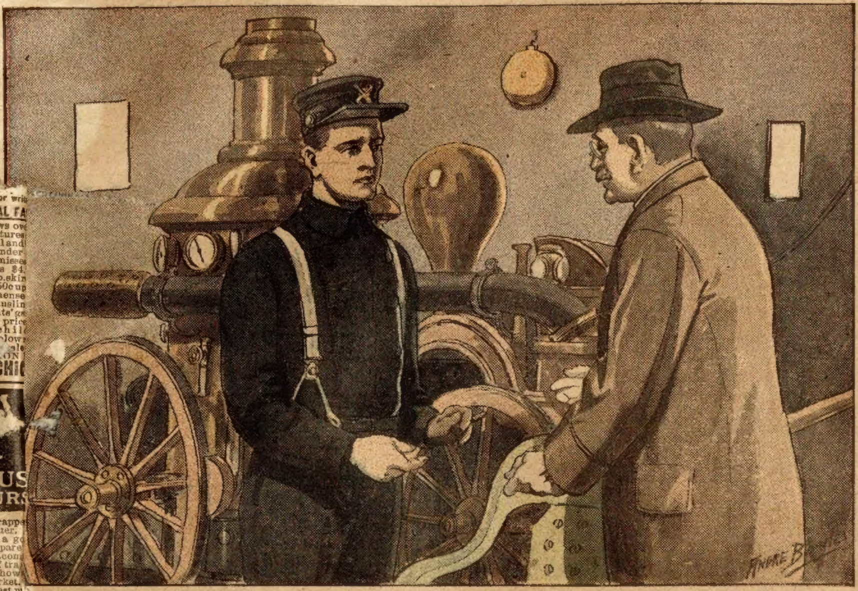

"Do you remember what it was?"

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un in No. 3, Jan. 20. Subscriptions n begin with that issue, or back pies can be obtained from news ands, our agents, or by mail from e office of publication.

CHAPTER V.

ERE IS NO OTHER WAY OUT!"

LUCKILY his late profession had accustomed Van Alstine to all sorts of late hours. Many a time he had even gone without any sleep; reaching home just in order to get a cup of hot coffee, change his clothes, and start on morning list of visits.

hard-worked physician knows what to be driven. This being the case Alstine did not bother his head in least about the possibility of his g kept on the go the better part of night. He would think this a pleas- granted that his efforts met with a measure of success.

irst I think I will look Frank up. always glad to see me; and with- exciting his suspicions I may learn a facts worth knowing."

this fashion, then, did he start to out his plan of campaign. For there t always be a beginning, a founda- upon which the structure can be ted.

nce he had used the name of Frank passionately when so suddenly re- bering where he had heard that of Jones, it could be taken for granted Van Alstine was now bent on look- up the address found on that fateful picked up on Doncaster's table. alico Lane!

e went into his own house first of The November night was cold, and expected to be out in the open any t length of time, as seemed probable, elt that he ought to don a light over- for comfort. But he did not waste time in securing this.

nce again he was on the go. Ten utes after quitting his own home Alstine drew up in front of a build- that was evidently one of the new elegantly equipped fire-engine es. Two men stood in the doorway, hough exchanging a few words be- separating; since one of them wore xtra coat, and had been visiting.

an Alstine recognized this man as a chief, who evidently was making a of the houses to find out how the carried themselves at unexpected s. That was his horse and light ve- e outside.

e recognized the doctor, had a few is of good cheer to pass with him, Van Alstine had once been connected the fire laddies in an official capac- and then the sub-chief jumped into buggy to speed away to some other on his tour of inspection.

"How are you, Doc? And what under the sun brings you around here at this time of night?"

It was the handsome, stocky young fireman who said this as he shook the other's hand warmly.

"Oh, I was in this neighborhood, and remembered that I had not seen you for quite some little time, Frank."

"Well, that's nice to know you haven't forgotten me after all, sir."

"Somehow, when I got to thinking of what you had told me the last time we met, I began to wonder if you would have the audacity to go and get married on the sly, without letting your best friends know."

Evidently Van Alstine expected his young friend to laugh long and heartily at this sally; for as a rule Frank Rollins was inclined that way. To his surprise he did nothing of the sort. Indeed, he even showed signs of being mentally disturbed.

"I don't know just how that matter is going to turn out, Doc, to tell the truth," he remarked, dubiously.

"What! been having a lover's quarrel, my boy?"

"Oh thunder, no! I doubt if any one could quarrel with that angel. But Alma is in a peck of trouble, and you see our getting married is simply out of the question, until her mother either gets better or passes away."

"Oh, I see! She has a sick mother, then?"

"Yes, very badly off. In fact the doctor has decided that he can do nothing more for her. He declares that her only hope is to have an operation by the celebrated Doctor Verchow, who he declares is the only man able to perform it successfully."

Van Alstine whistled.

"Five hundred if a cent, eh, Frank?" he said.

"That's just it, sir. I have a couple of hundred saved, but that would only be a flea bite. And besides, if I gave it up, which I offered to do, how could we ever get married within two years?"

"And the situation gives your girl cause for much sorrow, no doubt?"

"Why, the poor darling is nearly crazy with anxiety. You see she has an unusual love for that mother of hers. I don't understand it, but I'm satisfied to know that a girl who cares that way for her own mother is bound to make a mighty fine wife."

"Correct, Frank. But what do you suppose your girl will do—didn't you tell me her name was Alma Jones, and that she lived at 47 Calico Lane?"

Frank looked sideways at him.

"I remember telling you her name; but I must have mentioned her address when I wasn't thinking, because I didn't mean to tell it. Why, I don't know. I suppose she will have to let the old lady be taken to a hospital, and the regular doctors perform the job. But she understands that the chances are ten to one her poor mother will go then, for none of them understand this thing like Verchow."

"If the trouble is what I suspect, she is quite right in her surmise, too. That surgeon is a marvel of skill. I am ready to sit at his feet, any day, and learn. You say the girl is terribly worried?"

"My, yes! She thinks of nothing else. There's something on her mind, too. I tried to get her to tell me about it, but she shakes her head, and then looks at the sick woman as though she must be connected with it in some way. Once I heard her muttering something that has been haunting me ever since."

"When was this, Frank?" asked the other, soothingly.

"Just yesterday when I slipped around there on my turn off."

"Do you still remember what it was?"

"Sure I do, Doc. I tell you it worries me; for I'm afraid the dear girl is breaking down under the load she's been carrying so long."

"Suppose you tell me then what she said."

"Oh, she didn't think I heard. She was talking to herself at the time, just as tired and worried people often do, you know. She said it as if she had been arguing some matter over and over again, trying to find a loophole of escape. It was: "I'll have to do it—I'll just have to, no matter what she says! There is no other way out!""

No wonder a peculiar chill seemed to creep over the whole body of the man who listened. Surely those words must seem terribly significant when taken in connection with the awful happening at the Doncaster house.

What was it Alma felt she must do? What connection could there be between this pretty girl of the slums and the rich Addison Doncaster?

He had seemed to recognize something strangely familiar in her at the time of her first visit—although he hardly knew why he should do so, Van Alstine seemed to emphasize that one word, as though no doubt could exist in his mind as to the girl having paid a second trip to the rich man's house.

Who could she and her mother be? Had Doncaster known the older woman before?

Van Alstine had always fancied that there were more than a few turned-down pages in the past life of Doncaster—could Alma's mother have had any connection with one of them?

It was always possible, however improbable it might seem. But he meant to find this out, once he had made his real start on the trail.

Why Alma had dared call upon the rich man and leave her address might have a decided bearing on the issue.

"There is no other way out!"

Undoubtedly the spur of necessity was forcing the one who uttered these words to attempt something she had been forbidden to do. For the sake of the mother who seemed doomed unless Professor Verchow could be induced to perform one of his miraculous operations,

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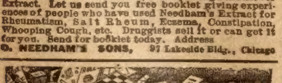

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Alma was making her mind up to do something! Undoubtedly this meant that she knew of a chance to get the money needed to pay the great surgeon; if only she could nerve herself up to the point of making the attempt.

Did that mean—murder, or robbery?

He would not have much fancied putting such a question to young Frank Rollins. The chances were he would be nursing a pair of black eyes for quite some time afterward; for Frank was a bit inclined to impulse, and might forget in his indignation the respect he had hitherto entertained for the genial gentleman who had taken such an interest in his own personal affairs.

It looked bad, that was the most Van Alstine would admit, even to himself. Perhaps, had he known Alma, he might have even then refused to believe, although the evidence kept on accumulating mountain high. But since he had never as yet met the charmer whom Frank adored, he could reason without hindrance, or bias, one way or the other.

Meanwhile the young fire laddie was observing his friend with more or less curiosity and growing uneasiness.

CHAPTER VI.

SEEKING LIGHT.

It was not a part of Van Alstine's plans that Frank Rollins should learn, just now, at any rate, of what a dire calamity hung over the head of the girl he expected to make his wife. There was more, much more, to be learned; and he had an idea the young fireman could be of considerable assistance to him.

Consequently, he pursued his investigations along a line that would make the other imagine his interest lay only in seeking a means for bridging the gulf opening up between the lovers.

Much as he disliked deceiving so fine a fellow as Frank Rollins, there was no other apparent method of picking up essential points.

"About how long has Mrs. Jones been seriously ill, Frank?" he asked, as if casually.

"Several months, now; but only lately has it taken such a serious turn. When Alma had to give up her position at the scent factory last Monday, and stay at her mother's bedside most of the time, I feared the end was close at hand; for of course we didn't know where to get that five hundred."

Out of all this Van Alstine seemed to hear but two words.

"What do you mean by scent factory?" he asked.

His outward appearance did not suggest an atom of the sudden riot within. For he had remembered the faint odor that seemed to cling about that black muslin mask which he had picked up in the dead man's library; and which must have been worn by the assassin!

"Oh, that's the common way the girls have of speaking of the place."

"Do they make cologne or extracts there?"

"Sure. Alma has been working in that same place about three years now. They paid her fair wages, for she was an expert hand. But of course her place will be filled right away. It's hard for the girl, too."

How hard he did not suspect, poor fellow! But Van Alstine knew, and was conscious of a new chill perambulating up and down his spinal column; for he feared very much that Frank was before long bound to be the recipient of a new shock.

It seemed to him just then that the whole case against Alma was written on a page in letters of fire.

She had been heard to say that only by some desperate means could she hope to raise the money needed to pay for the critical operation that might save her mother's life. She had visited Doncaster early in the evening, and he had been astounded at her appearance, proving that she must have reminded him of some one connected with his shadowy past. She had left her address with him, as though hoping he would relent, and send her the needed money.

Doubtless, had she wished, she could have found abundant opportunity, when passing from the library to the front door, to unfasten the catch of the window that later on had been found wide open, and must have been the avenue by means of which the assassin had come and gone. And now, last, but far from least, was that flimsy black mask, about which persistently lingered the unmistakable trace of perfume! And as Frank had said, Alma had long been working in a "scent factory!"

Still, after all, this dreadful array might only be looked upon in the light of circumstantial evidence. Van Alstine never depended absolutely upon such. Too often when the facts seemed to be as "strong as proofs of holy writ" he had seen the whole wretched fabric washed away as with a sponge.

He must have something more positive before he stood ready to believe that a young girl could have committed this grave crime, even though urged on by the spur of necessity in the shape of a dying mother.

"See here, Frank, a little delay in the case will not do any great harm; if my knowledge goes for anything. Am I right?" he observed, presently.

"Oh, no! The doctor said of course that the longer it was left the more difficult the operation might prove; but a delay of a few days, or a week, even, might not matter, I reckon, sir."

There was a sudden hopefulness in his voice. Something seemed to tell him that his friend, the retired doctor, must have thought of a plan.

"Well, leave it to me, Frank. Possibly I may be able to assist you and the girl. I don't care definitely to make promises; but I'm going to consider the matter meanwhile."

"God bless you, Doc. If you can find some way out, there's little I wouldn't do to repay you; for Alma worships her mother, and I'm afraid if she loses her right now it'll go hard with her."

He wrung the other's hand eagerly, and as he looked into the frank face of the young fireman, Van Alstine hoped more than ever that his investigation might only result in the complete vindication of the girl.

Just then he did not wish to say anything more, lest he unconsciously awaken the suspicions of Frank. So he left the fireman, and walked away.

He knew just where he was going, too. Right then and there his acquaintance with Doncaster proved valuable, for he was fully aware as to the lawyer employed by the dead man.

This gentleman was usually one of the quartette to play the old-fashioned whist when Van Alstine came to the mansion so near his own, or they gathered at his house. His name was Theodore Garrabrant, and for years he had been a shining legal light.

It also happened that he lived only half a dozen blocks away from Van Alstine, though spending several nights a week at his club, for he was a widower.

Knowing his habits fairly well, Van Alstine believed he could catch the lawyer readily. He dared not wait until morning. Too many things seemed to hinge on the result, with that murdered man still weltering in his blood on the floor of his library.

It lacked five minutes to midnight when he drew up in a taxicab in front of a huge pile known far and wide as one of the most exclusive of New York's clubs. This was early for clubmen, and he felt that he had at least a fair chance of catching Garrabrant before he started for his home. Again luck favored him.

Van Alstine was exceedingly gratified to find things breaking so favorably for him, since it seemed to presage a continuation of fortune's favors all through his undertaking. He met his man just going out!

"Hello! Van, glad to see you. Missed the light of your genial countenance tonight. Bailey queered the game for me. There seems to be a lack of intelligent understanding between us, that I find when I have you for a partner. I know what your play means, and can gauge my own accordingly; but he puzzles me. He has a method all his own."

Garrabrant was shaking hands while he spoke.

"I imagine that you have come out at the small end, then?" remarked the other, not wanting to be too abrupt.

"Oh, not to any great extent. The shoe doesn't pinch in that way. It's the aggravation of being licked, when by the favor of the cards we should have won. But what brings you here at this hour, man?"

"I thought I might find you!"

"Well, you were in luck, for I was just going home. That's my taxi waiting yonder."

"But you can come back for a few minutes, The?"

Garrabrant looked at him as though wondering what could be the matter. He knew the fad which the retired doctor pursued, and presumed that Van Alstine only wanted to ask his opinion as to the legal status of some point he had run up against in following his latest hobby.

"I suppose so, Doc. Always ready to oblige you with legal advice in return for your refusing any medical fees. Here's a nook unoccupied. Most of the boys away at the big Throckmorton affair tonight."

"And you'd rather join a few cronies in a sociable game here in the quiet of the club. Sensible man."

Van Alstine dropped into a cozy seat close beside the great lawyer, who handled the affairs of big corporations, and exacted immense fees.

"Now what's ailing you that you couldn't wait to see me at Doncaster's tomorrow night, when we have our next rubber?"

"Well, I was very much afraid that meeting would have to be called off, Garrabrant."

"Is the poor chap ailing still? Heard he was slightly under the weather. Fact is, Dutcher met me, and said you told him.

"I remember doing so. Something has happened since then to change the whole aspect of affairs."

"Great Scott! you don't mean to tell me he is gone?"

Van Alstine nodded in the affirmative.

"This is terribly sudden, old man! How—when did it happen?" gasped the lawyer, considerably excited for so composed a man.

"This very night. A thief got into his house; Doncaster interrupted him in the operation of breaking into his safe; there was a blow struck, and our friend was killed!"

CHAPTER VII.

Garrabrant was a lawyer, and as such accustomed to controlling his feelings

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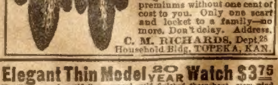

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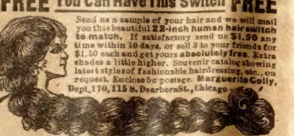

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more than most men. Yet even he gave an exclamation of horror.

"Poor Doncaster!" he exclaimed, with a shudder, "to meet with such a fate after his life of ease! It is simply awful, Van, you've given me a shock that will keep me awake the rest of the night!"

"Ditto myself, The. You can imagine how I felt to go into his library and find him there, being the very first to discover the gruesome fact."

"You mystify me. How the devil could you learn of it, Doc? Was your visit accidental, or had you dropped in to pay him a professional call?"

"Neither. I was summoned by Doncaster!"

"What's that?" demanded the lawyer, amazed.

"And with the last word the poor chap must have sunk to the floor; so that before I could leave my house he was undoubtedly dead!"

"For Heaven's sake tell me how it happened!"

Thereupon Van Alstine began his story with the sudden whir of the 'phone bell just as he was about to make use of the instrument. Garrabrant listened silently as the story unfolded. It was his way. All the time he was of course, weighing every little thing in that judicial mind of his; for he had sat in court as a judge for years.

But it was not the intention of the doctor-detective to unfold all he knew or suspected. The main facts must suffice for his present purpose. He had come here more to get information than to give it.

Garrabrant, as the legal adviser of the dead man, was undoubtedly in possession of certain facts, that, once disclosed, would lighten up the present darkness amazingly, and he wanted to coax the lawyer to confide in him.

"The fact that he used that suggestive word 'ingrate' must mean much, I believe," he said, in conclusion.

"Positively. From it we understand that after he had pulled the mask from the face of the thief, poor Doncaster must have recognized that person as one who was actually indebted to him for favors received."

"That was my opinion, too."

"Now, it might mean a servant; or, on the other hand, some one to whom he had been good. Doncaster was rather inclined to be generous. He had a superabundance of money; and many a time I've known him to pass over a loan to a club member who happened to get in a hole before his pension or monthly check fell due."

"You were his sole legal adviser, I believe The?"

"For the last five years, yes; and he confided in me to an extent I believe no other man enjoyed."

"Then you must know something of his history?"

Garrabrant hesitated, to weigh this carefully, after his customary cautious way.

"Yes, that is true."

"I am going to make a bold request, old fellow. You will believe me, I am sure, when I declare to you, on my honor, that the only reason I want to know these facts is the intense desire to discover the murderer of our friend."

"Do you mean that you want me to confide something connected with his past?'

"That is exactly what I was about to ask."

"It is a serious proposition, Van. The story was told to me under the pledge that I would never betray it."

"But it may have a positive bearing upon the discovery of the assassin; and if you persist in maintaining secrecy I will be greatly handicapped; for it means that I must go to another quarter, and hear it from the lips of the woman most interested."

"Great guns! you must already know or suspect, then, that Doncaster was once——"

He stopped short.

"Married!" finished Van Alstine, making a bold bid, and immediately discovering that his shot had gone home.

"I see that you are on the track. And do you mean to tell me that that woman still lives, and you can put your finger on her, here in New York?"

"I have reason to believe so, The," answered the detective-doctor, calmly, feeling that he had already won his case in-so-far as securing the information he sought went.

"Then I do not see that I have any right to keep the facts back from you. Especially since you hint that this remote incident may have a distinct bearing on the tragedy of poor Doncaster's death."

"Thank you. I assure you in the start that I will religiously keep the secret, only making use of my knowledge to run the assassin to earth."

"Wait. There comes Severance in, and not for worlds would I have him get wind of anything. Don't give a hint about what has happened," said Garrabrant, hastily.

"You don't like the gentleman, I fancy."

"I detest him."

"Yet they tell me he is quite a popular member of the club, and comes of good stock."

"Bah! He is a clever grafter in my opinion. I've known him to bleed scientifically several good fellows like Ascot and Merriwether; yes, I imagine he even stuck Addison once or twice. He's a scented dandy who thinks the world owes him a living just because his family used to be in the swim. Here he comes. Not a word now about Don, until he is gone."

Severance was an athletic-looking fellow, with a rather handsome face and snappy eyes. He looked rather flushed just now, Van Alstine saw, and hence concluded that the society man must have been dallying at the wine cup thus early in the night.

Personally he had never cared for Severance himself, though not sharing the positive dislike expressed by the lawyer.

Fortunately the young man did not linger long. He knew the ex-judge did not fancy his society; and had the good sense to limit his conversation to a few sentences, after which he passed on into the building.

"That's just my opinion of him in a nutshell," remarked Garrabrant, noticing that his companion was sniffing the air significantly after Severance had left them. "He's an excrescence on the good name of society; yet many of the dames will persist in petting him as though his good looks covered a multitude of follies. Far better men decorate the wall when he is present. It will end in his carrying off one of the season's prizes, likely enough."

Van Alstine did not seem to be listening. A faraway look was upon his face, and his eyes had assumed a half-closed appearance that usually marked serious contemplation on his part. Then he suddenly awakened to the fact that the coming of the young society man had interrupted Garrabrant at a very interesting point.

"Please go on now, and tell me about Doncaster's unfortunate marriage," he said.

"In a nutshell, then, he was married about twenty years ago, to a young woman he met in a Western city. Her name was Alma Thorndyke, and so far as he knew she had no relatives. The story is a sad one, and you can supply the missing chapters from experiences you must have had in conducting your investigations.

"She turned out bad. Doncaster learned that a friend of his was taking her out riding when he was away on his business trips. A deadly quarrel followed, and one night she vanished, taking with her the little child that had seemed to be a pledge of happiness between them."

"Pardon me, but was that child not a girl?

"Yes. Doncaster did not attempt to pursue. He hated as he had formerly loved. Later on, when he would have liked to find the child, and taken it from the runaway wife, he was unable to get the faintest trace of her. So time has passed on. I think he never forgave her, if what he said to me could be taken in evidence."

"But surely his hatred could not extend to the child, which was his as well as hers?"

"I am coming to that, Van. He remembered that the girl had looked like the mother, and for that he included her in his scheme for revenge. But in time that vindictiveness wore away. I flatter myself that I had something to do with a change in his sentiment."

"You mean he relented?"

"Six months ago I drew up his will to supplant the old one, in which he had left every cent of his money to colleges and public charities."

"And the new will?"

"Left the bulk of his fortune to his daughter, Alma Doncaster, if proofs of her identity that were unimpeachable could be shown!"

Van Alstine was speechless for the moment. He was thinking of that strange scene when the hardened Doncaster found himself confronted by his own child,

(Continued on page ten.)

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Chicago Ledger

Entered as second-class matter June 25, 1885, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879.

Published Every Saturday
By W. D. BOYCE CO., CHICAGO, ILL.
500 Dearborn Avenue.

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Single subscriptions to The Chicago Ledger by mail $1.00 a year, 50 cents for six months, in advance. Remittances should be made by Bank Draft, Registered Letter, Postoffice or Express Money Order, payable to The Chicago Ledger. Subscription price in Canada $1.50 a year. We do not send receipts for money paid on subscriptions; the address tab on your paper shows the date to which your subscription is paid.

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1,000,000
COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS.

Every man knows better than he does.

If you would shoot the rapids use a gunboat.

Girls look upon young widows as brazen things.

An ounce of prevention is also worth a pound of regret.

As a rule quickly made friendships soon spring a leak.

Some men never reach the top because the elevator isn't running.

It's easier for a dentist to fill an aching void than a long felt want.

The minds of women should be clean. They change them so often.

Fortunately the average man is unable to realize how homely he is.

A vain woman would rather hear her complexion praised than her virtues.

A fool tells what he is going to do, but a wise man points to what he has done.

People who see themselves as others see them never believe what they see.

If it takes two to make a quarrel, and a husband and wife are one—what's the answer?

Lots of men would make good if employed to furnish the motive power for windmills.

Men wouldn't have time to earn a living if they had to put their hair up as women do.

The wife of the man who knows it all gets back at him occasionally by saying: "I told you so!"

The wise girl doesn't take any chances by wearing a lot of pins in the vicinity of her waist line.

Woman is an institution to which a man pays homage during courtship and indemnity after marriage.

When a woman calls for her husband to "come here a minute," he knows she has a two hours' job for him.

As a general rule married men do not lie from choice. But their wives persist in asking such foolish questions.

How small a forty-horse power automobile must feel when it is being hauled home by a couple of homely mules!

And a wise bachelor always hikes for the tall timber when he hears a girl say that she intends to be an old maid.

According to one of them, a married man's day is divided as follows: Eight hours for sleep, eight hours for work and eight hours for explanations.

(Continued from page nine.)

come to plead with him for the life of her mother, and she the wretched woman he had cursed in his heart all these years. That interview must have been a weird one.

Had the girl come alone to tell him that her mother was dead, possibly Doncaster might have received her with open arms. The mention of his former faithless wife had perhaps thrown him into a frenzy of rage, and as a consequence Alma had gone away broken-hearted—desperate! He would do much for the girl, but nothing to save the life of the one she loved!

And Alma, could she have been tempted, tortured by the terrible outlook, to return, and take what in her defiant heart she believed was hers by rights?

CHAPTER VIII.

AT THE FOOT OF THE STAIRS.

Van Alstine, the criminal investigator, turned again to his lawyer friend.

"You will never know how valuable this information is to me, Garrabrant, unless after it is all over I will tell you the whole story. But when making this later will, did you see any evidence that Doncaster might recognize his lost daughter, if by chance he found her?"

"No, I can't say I did. He had not forgotten how she favored her mother in looks, as a child; and believed that the very sight of her would cause him to allow his hatred to descend from the Alma he had known to the child. So he never expressed any wish that she could be found while he lived. He simply had reached a decision that he ought to provide for her after he was gone."

Again Van Alstine remembered something that stood out significantly. The housekeeper had told him how Doncaster had stared at Alma as though he saw a ghost of the past, while from his very heart rang out the cry: "Who are you, girl?" It was all as plain as print.

"I think I understand what you mean, Garrabrant. He had soured on the charity business, from some cause, and somehow the notion of leaving his fortune to a genuine Doncaster began to appeal to him."

"Fostered by my specious pleas, yes. And that is the way matters stand just now. I have that will in my safe; and if the girl can be found she must come into pretty much the entire estate, which, as you know, is over a cool million."

Van Alstine, deep down in his heart, fervently trusted that this black shadow hovering over the fair head of Alma might be dissipated, and the sun of happiness descend instead. For though he had never as yet set eyes on her face, he had heard her lover describe it as that of an angel.

But just now the gloom was thick enough to be cut with a knife. Glorious news as this matter of the will was for the girl, of what avail would it prove should she be found guilty of having crept into her father's house to rob his safe; and upon being discovered, in her desperation having struck with the first thing her hand fell upon?

Nothing!

Well, he had learned about all that his friend Garrabrant was in a position to disclose. It at least proved his former suspicions beyond all dispute.

More than that, it put him in possession of important facts that were bound to have a decided bearing on the outcome of the affair. And all this in not much more than a quarter of an hour's time.

He felt that he was making progress. But the hardest task yet lay beyond.

Alma! Yes, it was imperative that he seek the poverty-stricken home of the heiress, and discover what facts there were bearing on the matter.

Had the girl gone straight home after her interview with Doncaster? Ah! if she had, and could only prove it positively, the case against her must fall to the ground.

There would be some hours between the time when the housekeeper saw her gliding away, wringing her hands in despair, and the moment when the rich man confronted the thief in his library.

"Ingrate!"

Somehow that one terrible word seemed to be giving Van Alstine more uneasiness than anything else. Perhaps Doncaster may have even told his daughter how he stood ready to take her in if she but abandoned her mother. In so doing, after making that will in her favor, he may have considered that he stood in the light of a benefactor to Alma. That would account for the use of the word.

Had he only mentioned a name when he sent those broken sentences over the wire, what trouble might not have been saved?

As it was, the investigator had only vague clews to base his theories upon, and must rely on deduction almost wholly in order to win out. But the prospect did not daunt him one iota.

On the contrary it called for a display of his best energies, and that was a spur to his intelligence.

"I will not detain you any longer, Judge. Thank you many times for your confidence. It has cleared the air remarkably for me, and saved me from hunting up those facts at headquarters," he said, shaking hands.

"And that wretched woman is still alive? Look here! Do you know whether the daughter also lives?"

"I believe I can answer that in the affirmative."

"Do you know her? Does she look like the picture you might imagine her mother made as a girl?"

"Indeed, I am unable to say, since up to the present moment I have never so far as I know set eyes on either Alma or her mother."

"I see there is a story back of it, and must insist that you promise to tell me later on. Surely you owe me some return, Van."

"You shall have it. I only hope the affair turns out well for the girl, because I am very fond of the young fellow who expects to marry her."

"Phew! This is getting exciting now. A love issue appears in the offing. But why shouldn't the matter turn out well for the girl? Great Heavens!"

"Now please ask me no questions, for I cannot stop to answer them, even if I would." For Van Alstine saw that the keen-witted lawyer had jumped at some conclusion that bore heavily on the possibility of the girl being connected with the tragedy.

And as he left Garrabrant at the curb, each to jump into a waiting taxicab, he saw the great lawyer shake his head and heard him say: "Best wishes, Van, and here's hoping that what you fear doesn't materialize!"

Van Alstine now had to devote his entire attention to what lay ahead. He was about to do a bold thing, but could excuse himself under the plea that it was all for the good of the girl herself. If she were really innocent of this terrible charge, then she could not be cleared too speedily. Somehow he kept this thought in his mind all the while.

He did not want to think of what would follow should he discover that the girl were guilty—that in her desperation she had sacrificed herself for the sake of the mother she loved, and whom Doncaster would not lift a finger to save from approaching death. And yet there was a positive chance looking that way.

Never did the active brain of this really clever man work more industriously than just then. He had to map out his course.

He must explain why he, a complete stranger, sought admission to the humble home of Alma and her sick mother, so that he could talk with the girl, endeavor to read her story in her face, and possibly try to find if she had secured the longed-for funds with which to purchase a new lease of life for her mother?

Ah! yes, once again he had cause to congratulate himself over the fact that his abandoned profession had been that of medicine. That must be his plea.

As a good friend of Frank Rollins he had promised to visit the sick woman the first time he was down in that neighborhood. Doctors never know when they may be called, and so it happened that, being in the vicinity at this late hour, he had taken it upon himself to keep his promise. Under cover of this explanation he believed he could carry out his little plan. Especially since those he visited were doubtless of an unsuspicious nature, and could see nothing out of the way in his coming.

He felt very queer about doing this thing, and had to bolster up his courage by declaring over and over to himself that his purpose was really to save, not condemn, the girl. If he declined the task, some other sleuth, in the employ of the city, might get on the trail, and without the slighest scruple drag the whole history of Doncaster's past into the public print.

At a certain corner he ordered his vehicle stopped. Down in the region of Calico Lane a taxicab was so seldom seen that its advent might be apt to create more curiosity than he cared to handle. So he gave orders for the chauffeur to wait for him there, no matter how long he were absent.

The man had one of his cards, and knew that his fee was certain to reach him. Hence a matter of hours did not concern him.

Van Alstine made his way along the almost deserted narrow streets. He was not sure but that he might be assaulted by some venturesome footpad, for presently he found himself in a very squalid neighborhood, where respectable people hesitated to come after a certain hour of the night.

As he looked about him he saw a man step out from some shadowy hiding-place. To his relief, however, it turned out to be a patrolman, who advanced toward him, looking keenly as though in doubt as to what he saw.

"Good evening, officer," Van Alstine said, pleasantly.

"Same to yees, sor. I'm a-thinkin' perhaps ye've run off your track; and maybe yees don't know the danger ye do be runnin' down in this deestrict, sor?"

"Oh! yes I do, officer. I'm a doctor, you see, and I've come here on a very important errand. Can you direct me to Number 47 Calico Lane?"

Apparently the survey of the policeman had been favorable, for he assumed a friendly attitude.

"I can do more than thot, sor. If so be ye'll step alongside of me, I'll pilot yees direct to the spot. To tell the truth, I do be kapin' that same tinemint

(Continued on page thirteen.)

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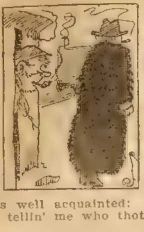
Pickled Peppers

His Reputation.

One cold winter day some railroad officials, while making an inspection of a large yard, stepped for a moment inside a switchman's shanty to get warm. Among them was a general superintendent who was known to have a mania for "scientific management" and the reduction of expenses. As they were leaving the switchman asked the traveling yardmaster, with whom he was well acquainted:



"Now, can ye be tellin' me who thot mon is?"

"That's the general superintendent," the yardmaster replied.

"What do you think of thot? He's a foine-lookin' mon, and ye never would believe the tales ye are hearin' about him."

"What have you heard about him, Mike?" was the curious question.

"Why, they do say that he was at the funeral of Mr Mitchell's woife, and when the six pallbearers come out he raised his hand and said: 'Hold on a minute, boys. I think yees can get along without two of thim.'"

⁂

An Exception.

"I thought you told me this place was so healthy that nobody ever died here?" objected the prospective purchaser to the real estate agent

"I did, and I'll stick to it."

"I'll bet you will. You also told me that people in this suburb didn't have to pay grocery bills, because the ground raised their vegetables for the——"

"I told you that, too."

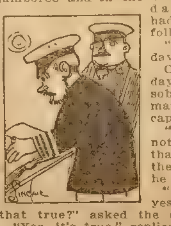
"How do you account for the fact that one of your prominent citizens died of starvation yesterday?"

"That was a doctor."

⁂

Just as True.

The mate had been enjoying a day's jamboree and in the ship's log for the day the captain had inscribed the following:



"Mate drunk today"

On the following day, after he had sobered up, the mate sought the captain.

"Captain, you're not going to let that stand there in the log, are you?" he asked.

"You were drunk yesterday; isn't that true?" asked the captain.

"Yes, it's true," replied the mate.

"Well, as long as it's true it stands in the log," said the captain.

A few days later the captain was scanning the log and he came across the following:

"The captain sober today."

"What do you mean by inserting in the log that I am sober today?" he asked of the mate.

"It's true, isn't it?" the mate inquired.

"Of course, it's true. I was never known to be drunk in all my life," said the captain.

"Well, as long as it's true it stands in the log," replied the mate.

⁂

Not a Safe Place.

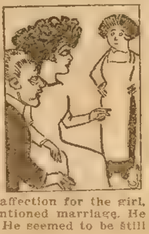
Mrs. De Good—Wouldn't it be a good idea to put your money in the big family Bible?

Deacon De Good (contemptuously)—Y-e-s, and some day the minister will drop in and cabbage every cent of it.

⁂

She Got Him.

"Diplomacy is hard to define," said Senator Curtis at a luncheon in Topeka. "It is, however easy to illustrate. Here is an illustration of diplomacy.



"A Topeka girl, one brisk autumn evening, sat beside the warm and clanking radiator with a young man. This young man was a good catch. But, though he called often and though he showed many evidences of affection for the girl, he had not yet mentioned marriage. He seemed uncertain. He seemed to be still on the fence.

"Well, the brisk evening I'm speaking of, at about 9 o'clock the cook knocked at the parlor door, entered and said respectfully:

"'What shall I give your father for his breakfast in the morning, miss?'

"'Deviled kidney, I think, Hannah,' said the Topeka girl. 'Father, these cold mornings, is so fond of deviled kidneys.'

"'Yes, miss; and would you mind telling me how to prepare it, miss?'

"'Soak the kidney,' was the reply, 'for three hours in cold water, changing the water twice. Then cut into slices, season highly with salt and pepper and fry a bright brown. Now add a little warm water and stew very gently. Meanwhile prepare the sauce—four tablespoonfuls of cold gravy, one of Chutney paste, one of ketchup, one of vinegar, two teaspoonfuls of made mustard, two of salt and four of butter. Mix well, pour on the kidney and stew gently again till done.'

"'Oh, thank you, miss,' said the cook gratefully.

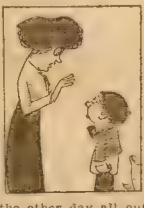
"The cook had hardly gone when the young man, a new and tender light shining from his eyes, plopped down on one knee

"'Miss Cosgrove—Mildred—dear one,' he began."

■

Joke on Mother.

A certain little boy on the West side has lived the short span of his life in an atmosphere in which the postal service predominates. His father is employed in the Postoffice and studies schemes at home out loud, so it's no wonder that the little fellow is looking forward to the life of a postman.



"Mother, I've been playing postman," said the little boy, entering the house the other day all out of breath.

"Playing postman?" she asked. "Where have you been playing postman?"

"Right here on our street. I've delivered letters to every single house on our side."

"What kind of letters?"

"Real letters."

"Why, you little dear. Where did you get them?"

"Right out of your bureau drawer. I took those old ones that you had tied up in a pink ribbon."

⁂

Modified Conceit.

Post—Thinks he's the whole thing, does he?

Parker—Well, I'd hardly go as far as that, but he certainly considers himself a quorum.

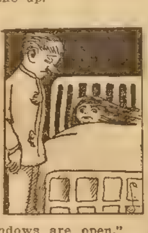
■

Domestic Dialogues.

"John, John. Wake up."

"Huh?"

"John, John. Wake up. It's raining."



"I don't care."

"John, do you hear me? It's raining something awful."

"I can't help it 'Tisn't my fault."

"John!"

"Go to sleep"

"John, do pay attention to me. It's raining."

"I heard you the first time."

"But all the windows are open."

"Who opened them?"

"I don't know. But I want them closed."

"What for?"

"Because it's raining. Do you hear me? You'd sleep through anything, I believe."

"Anything 'cept your voice."

"Don't argue with me, but get up and close the windows."

"Which windows?"

"All of them."

"I didn't hear the baby ask for a drink of water."

"I didn't say she did."

"Then go back to sleep."

"For goodness sake, do get up. The way you sleep is a wonder to me! I've had you roused six times and you've gone right back to sleep again every time. Now get up and shut those windows."

"Aw right."

He staggers out of bed, gropes about in the dark, barks his shins on the rocker of the chair, turns and bumps into an open door, finally turns on the light and says:

"Say, I've forgotten what I got up for' What was it you wanted me to do?"

■

If a man thinks before he speaks some woman will beat him to it.

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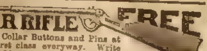

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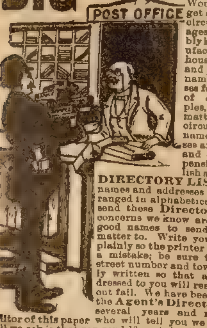

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(Continued from page two.)

"Oh, mistress, you cannot go like that! There are men in there, down in his study!"

"But he wants me at once!"

The maid shook her head.

"No, my lady; he doesn't want you now—he won't ever want any one again!"

"He is dead?" asked Kate, in a tone of horror.

The maid nodded, adding after a pause: "But not from illness. It is the police that are there!"

Kate with one or two swift movements, gathered up the masses of her dark hair into a knot; plunged her face into a basin of cold water, and hurriedly put on her clothes, helped by Parker's trembling fingers. Then she sped downstairs and went toward the room she had left such a short time ago. A grave-faced police inspector came forward and stopped her.

"Not yet, lady. Will you please speak to Doctor Roscoe? He is in the morning-room, seeing if anything can be done!"

Doctor Roscoe looked keenly at the beautiful woman before him, and put her very gently into an arm chair, for she was trembling from head to foot. The officer had followed her in and stood watching her, as did a police officer in plain clothes.

"You have heard the terrible news, Mrs. Hohenberg?" said the Doctor.

"My maid told me that my husband was dead. Is it true, Doctor Roscoe? Tell me at once. I cannot bear suspense—is it true?"

The Doctor nodded.

"How did he die?"

"That is what he are here to find out," said the inspector.

The sound of his harsh voice startled Kate.

"Can I see him?" she asked.

"You had better not at present. No one is allowed in the room; no one has entered it but the police since the discovery was made by one of your footmen this morning. Mr. Hohenberg was found lying on the floor of his study, stabbed to the heart."

Kate gave a groan.

"Now, lady, it is my duty to ask you one or two questions which you cannot be forced to answer as yet and which you must consider well, for your answers will be repeated in the coroner's court, and, it may be, during the course of any further proceedings. I am sorry to trouble you at such a moment, when you must be overwhelmed with grief."

Again something in the man's tone grated upon Kate's sensitive ear.

"Of course you can ask me any questions you like," she said.

"You fully understand that your answers will be taken down and used hereafter as evidence?"

"I fully understand. It is naturally my wish to give the police all the help in my power."

"I understand you gave a dance last night. Was Mr. Hohenberg present?"

"Until shortly before midnight; then he came to me and said he had to go out on important business, and that I must not let his absence attract attention; he added that he would not get home until sometime this afternoon."

"He did not indicate the nature of his business?"

"No; he did not confide everything to me."

"And you did not see him again?"

Once more the curious hard tone crept into the inspector's voice.

"No," said Kate.

"At what hour did your guests go away?"

"Every one had gone before four o'clock."

"And you went to bed immediately?"

"I went—soon, not immediately."

"One of your servants thought she heard your door close a few minutes before five o'clock. Could she have been right?"

"She may have been."

"Are you perfectly certain Mr. Hohenberg left the house at all? Might he not have shut himself up in his study to do some important work?"

"I am sure he did not!"

"How can you be sure?"

"Because he was not there when I——" Kate stopped abruptly.

"When you went into his study?" asked the inspector. "Then you did go in?"

"I—I looked in on my way upstairs."

"And you saw nothing to rouse your suspicions? You heard nothing?"

"Nothing. Oh I forgot! After I got to my own room, just about five, I thought I heard some one close a door down stairs; but I was sleepy, and supposed it was one of the servants."

"That is all you know? Was Mr. Hohenberg in his usual health and spirits last evening?"

"He was perfectly well and in good spirits."

"Then, Mrs. Hohenberg, we need not detain you further, if you are sure that is all you can tell us. By the way, I suppose your maid attended you?"

"No; I had told her to retire, earlier in the evening."

"Ah! Thank you, that is all just now. I wonder if we may ask you to remain here for a few minutes with Doctor Roscoe, who will help you to recover from the shock? There will be much for you to do today, and, I fear, a great trial for your feelings."

Kate, left alone with the Doctor, looked appealingly at him.

"What does it all mean?" she asked. "What does that man mean by his curious manner? He cannot think that I—— oh, it is too monstrous!—he cannot suspect me of knowing anything about Lesley's—my husband's death?"

"Of course not!" said the Doctor, hastily. "My dear madam, compose yourself. The police are bound to leave no stone unturned. I know you cannot bring yourself to eat anything just now, but I am going to ring the bell and ask for some strong coffee for you; your pulse is weak and irregular."

Meanwhile the inspector and the detectives had sent for Parker, Kate's maid. She came into their presence, white and nervous and on the brink of tears.

"Now sit down," said the inspector, kindly enough. "There is no need for you to be agitated unduly. We only want to put one or two questions to you and to take down your answers, in case they may be of use. You did not sit up for your mistress last night?"

"No, sir; Mrs. Hohenberg wouldn't let me. She knew I had had a headache yesterday, so she sent me off to bed directly she was dressed in the evening, and said she could manage for herself."

"But elaborate dresses are difficult for ladies to take off without help, are they not?" said the officer blandly.

"Yes, sir; but mistress was wearing her white velvet, and she can get out of that by herself."

"I should like to have a look at that dress," said the inspector—"just by way of education, you know. Please fetch it, and Miss—ah, yes; Miss Parker!—bring with you the shoes your lady wore and her gloves and fan, and make sure that her jewels are all in their proper places."

The two men, left alone, relapsed into gloomy silence. They looked at each other, and the inspector shrugged his shoulders. Parker returned quickly, carrying a beautiful gown of white velvet and old point lace. The two men examined it minutely, touching the delicate fabrics with extreme care, as Parker's jealous eyes assured her.

"The shoes? You have brought them?"

"Yes." Parker had brought a little pair of white velvet shoes, which were also examined carefully, especially the soles.

Then, with an air of total unconcern, the inspector said: "And the gloves?"

Parker's honest face looked a little troubled. "I couldn't find them, sir—at least not both," she said. "Here is the left-hand one right enough, but its fellow is missing. I brought you down another pair, just so that you could see the sort."

Parker was bewildered by her errand. "Are you quite sure that the other glove is missing?"

"Well, sir, this one glove was lying on the dressing-table with the fan, but I couldn't see the other. I will go and have another look, if you like, but I'm pretty sure it's not there."

"This gentleman will go with you," said the inspector. "He is an officer, and you can show him your lady's jewels, the

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in all kinds of household utensils—enameled, tin, iron, copper, brass, etc. *Solders Without Heat.* Just squeeze from tube and spread over hole or crack with fingers. Hardening, it makes solid, smooth surface. Patches all machinery. Fine for motorists.
Send 10c for trial tube.
MARVEL SOLDER CO. 1937 Broadway Dept. 6 New York
AGENTS WANTED QUICK SALES BIG PROFITS

$22.50 AND UP each week
Few hours work—sales quick—sure. Men, it's an easy winner. Snyder made $46 in two hours. Finch sold 42 in nine hours. Had no experience. "Ever-Ready" Tool Kit. New, improved. 10 tools in one. Free sample to workers. Write quick.
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AGENTS My Sanitary Coffee Maker produces pure, sweet coffee, needs no settler and never wears out. Saves coffee, money and health. Every wife buys at sight; new invention; exclusive territory. Send 15c. for 50c. size postpaid.
DR. LYONS, 2201 Locust St., Box B, St. Louis, Mo.

I PAY $50.00 for Each Sale
I want High-class Salesmen to act as General Agents for the selection of FLORIDALAND No experience necessary. No capital required. Good men earn $100 to $500 weekly. Sideline men easily make $50 to $200 weekly. Send for "Confidential Circular to General Agents," and "Selling Manual." Both free.
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768 Hartford Bldg., CHICAGO

A MONEY PROPOSITION
Do you want to own a mail order business—be independent—your own boss? Would you manage an Agency for me in your vicinity without expense to you? All printed matter furnished for one-half the profits. Write for particulars. HAZEN A. HORTON, Dept. B, Tekonsha, Mich.

AGENTS! BIG PROFITS

The only Stropper that strops the razor diagonally. Guaranteed for Life.
Brandt's patented Automatic Razor Stropper, Automatically puts a perfect edge on any razor. OLD style or SAFETY. Big seller. Every man wants one. Write quick for terms, prices, territory. Address A.T.Brandt Cutlery Co., 84 W.Broadway, N.Y

AGENTS Handkerchiefs, Dress Goods. Carleton made $8.00 one afternoon. Mrs. Bosworth $25.00 in 2 days. $10 a day FREE SAMPLES. Credit. Stamp brings particulars. Freeport Mfg. Co., 52 Main St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

AGENTS—233⅓% profit for you and a mail order business of your own; 25c article that is a world beater; 65 orders a day is one agent's record; 25c stamps or coin brings you complete sample and full plan in starting business for yourself. Address AIR LINE MFG. CO., B-4, LANCASTER, OHIO

WE PAY $80 A MONTH SALARY and furnish rig and all expenses to introduce our guaranteed stock and poultry powders; money-back guarantee; outfit free; new plan; steady work. Address BIGLER CO., X 520, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

ones she wore last night, and make sure that none are missing."

Parker was appeased by the last sentence. Evidently all the men thought was that there had been thieves in the house, and that a greater crime had been committed to screen a lesser.

After a short time the officer returned and shook his head.

"The jewels are safe," he said, "but the glove is not there."

"Thank you, Parker!" said the inspector blandly. "I am glad the jewels are safe. We will not keep you longer."

At this moment Doctor Roscoe came to the door, and said: "Mrs. Hohenberg wishes to speak to you, inspector."

The two officers returned to the morningroom where Kate sat.

"I wish to see my husband," she said. "Surely I may go to him now?"

The inspector looked doubtfully at the other officer, but the latter shook his head.

"Not now. It would be too great a shock, lady. He is dead, as you know, stabbed through the heart, and the room must be left as it is, for the present at least."

"Is it in disorder?" asked Kate, nervously. "Had he been reading or writing? I mean, were there papers lying about?"

The inspector's face was a trifle graver than before, as he said: "There were no papers lying about. Apparently the deceased gentleman was arranging some correspondence, for he had opened a secret drawer in his writing-table; but it was empty."

Kate Hohenberg fainted for the first time in her life, and had to be carried to her own room. Here Parker watched over her with an agony of care, exclaiming at intervals angrily against the folly and wickedness of men who asked questions out of sheer curiosity.

The two men against whom she demanded vengeance were closeted together in the study to which they had refused admittance to every one else. They conferred together over two objects which lay on the table in front of them; one of these was an Indian knife of blue wavy steel stained for three-quarters of its length a dull red; the other was a long white kid glove, the right-hand glove, and across its palm lay a bar of the same dull red.

"I suppose there is little doubt about this case?" said the inspector. "It is a pity, too, for she is one of the handsomest women I have ever seen!"

"Mrs. Hohenberg is the greatest beauty in Washington," said the detective. "I suppose you were speaking of her?"

"Well, you know that I was. What do you make of that, and that?" He indicated the knife and the glove.

"I make a very extraordinary bit of circumstantial evidence, so plain and so apparently convincing that I doubt it."

"What! You don't believe that two and two make four?"

"Oh, yes, provided the different sets of two are of a kind! That is my difficulty. There was no sign of guilt—at least not of that sort of guilt—on the lady's face. It was only half way through your questioning that she suddenly remembered something—or someone—and began to hedge. Then there was her question about the papers."

"Yes, there was that question, and a very suspicious thing I thought it was. Why should she have guessed anything about the writing-table? No one mentioned that we had found the poor man near it."

"That convinced me that she was not the criminal. If she had been the person to do the murder, she would have known quite well all about the drawer and the papers, and she would not have had to ask."

"Well, we shall see what the coroner and his jury think of it," said the inspector. "The inquest will be held early tomorrow, and I rather fancy the lady will be in for a very rough time!"

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this remarkable story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money can buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

* * *

A Hawaiian Habit.

Servants in the Sandwich Islands have a curious habit, says a writer, of calling their employers by their first name. Hers, she adds, was always saying, "Yes, John," to her husband, and "Very well, Mary," to her.

When we got a new cook I told my husband to avoid calling me "Mary," so that the cook, not knowing my name would have to say "missus" to me. So John always called me "sweetheart" or "deary," never Mary.

One day we had some officers to dinner, and I told them the rule I had adopted and added, "By this servant, at least, you won't hear me called Mary."

Just then the new cook entered the room. He bowed and said to me, "Sweetheart, the dinner is served."

"What?" I stammered, aghast at his familiarity.

"Dinner is served, deary," answered the new cook.

* * *

Many a man has been robbed by his friends while watching his enemies.

A Clew by Wire.

(Continued from page ten.)

under observation the while, since it is belaved to harbor a clever thief. This way, Docther."

Van Alstine would not allow himself to imagine for a moment that there could be any possible connection between this "clever thief" whom the officer had under surveillance, and the girl who had promised Frank Rollins that some day she would be his wife.

Still, the fact did not tend to make him feel any more confident, somehow or other.

For the life of him he could not refrain from asking a question. Something seemed simply to force him along.

"Is this thief a man or a woman, officer?"

"Nayther, sor. It's a slip av a girrl, and she do be givin' us a lot av throuble, so she do. But I'm waitin' till the time comes when I hov me ordhers to arrist her. The wagon will be along after a bit. They're roundin' up a couple av gamblin' houses, an' luggin' the stuff till the central station. Here yees are, sor. This is 47. And plaze say niver a worrd about what I do be tillin' yees."

"Thank you. I'll not open my mouth. I have other fish to fry, at any rate. Good-night!"

He saw the officer vanish behind some barrels that were heaped up to one side, and knowing that the coast was clear, Van Alstine entered the building.

It was a huge pile, at least six stories tall, and no doubt gave shelter to scores of families. Somewhere among the multitude of rooms Alma and her sick mother might be found.

Perhaps, had he been in the society of the talkative officer longer, he might have secured points looking to locating those he sought, for no doubt the other would know pretty much who all the tenants were, and where they were to be found. But that chance was gone now and he must depend on his own individual powers of discernment to lead him to his goal

As he stood at the foot of the stairs, he was gratified to hear some one descending. This promised to open up a means of communication through which he might gather points, so he waited.

The person coming down was undoubtedly a man, for he could hear him muttering as though not in the best temper imaginable. Still, Jared Van Alstine knew of a panacea for surliness, especially in such a neighborhood. He took out some silver and held it in his hand.

Closer came the one descending. A dingy light kept the entrance of the tenement from being in absolute darkness; and this feeble glow enabled the doctor-detective to see the person who, reaching the foot of the stairs, confronted him.

This strange story leads to extraordinary situations and dramatic episodes. The reader will find it eminently worth reading to the end. Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of it. The surest way to get the Ledger is to subscribe for it and have it come to your home regularly. Today is a good time to attend to this.

* * *

A Half-Shaved Company.

Some years ago an amusing incident was witnessed on board the ship Tempest, at the close of a long voyage from India to England. Nobody had attempted to shave on the trip until they neared Southampton, when there was a general request for razors.

It happened that there was only one to be had, all the others being packed away with the heavy luggage in the hold. The owner of the solitary razor consented to lend it to his fellow passengers, but on condition that each one should at first shave half his face only, the owner then to have first use. He carefully shaved one side of his face, and then passed the razor on.

In due time the razor came back to its owner, who at once shaved the other side of his face; and then, by a sudden turn of his wrist, he jerked the razor into the sea.

How they all groaned! And yet they never laughed more than they did after they got over the first shock. When they landed every man seemed to have a bad face ache, to judge from the handkerchiefs and scarfs which were held to their jaws, and there was an immediate rush to the nearest barbers' shops.

* * *

Clever Rover.

"Yes, dogs are undoubtedly sagacious animals," Jones said to his friends, "but none of your dog stories will beat this. My friend Johnson had a most intelligent retriever. One night Johnson's house caught fire. All was instant confusion. Old Johnson and his wife flew for the children and bundled out with them pretty sharp. Alas, one of the children had been left behind, but up jumped the dog, rushed into the house, and soon reappeared with the missing child, which he deposited on the lawn. Everyone was saved, but Rover dashed through the flames again. What did the dog want? No one knew. Presently the noble animal reappeared, scorched and burned, with—what do you think?"

"Give it up," chorused the eager listeners.

"With the fire policy, wrapped in a damp towel, gentlemen!"

$1.00 DOWN

Billiards and Pool are expensive games if played in a public poolroom, but almost anyone can afford to have at home a

BURROWES
Billiard and Pool Table

You can play on it while you are paying for it. The prices are $6, $15, $25, $35, $45, $55, $75, etc., on easy terms of $1 or more down (depending on size and style selected), and a small amount each month. Sizes range up to 4½x9 feet (standard). Complete playing equipment of balls, cues, etc., free.

No special room is needed. The Burrowes Table can be set on your dining-room or library table, or mounted on its own legs or folding stand, and quickly set aside when not in use. Burrowes Tables are

Used by Experts

for home practice. The most delicate shots, calling for skill of the highest type, can be executed with the utmost accuracy.

FREE TRIAL—NO RED TAPE.

On receipt of first installment we will ship Table. Play on it one week. If unsatisfactory return it, and on its receipt we will refund your deposit. This ensures you a free trial. Write today for illustrated catalog, giving prices, terms, etc.

E. T. BURROWES CO., 1016 Center Street, Portland, Me.

GOLD SIGNET RING FREE. Send your name and address for 12 packages of finest silk and gold Post Cards to distribute at 10 cts. each. Return us the $1.20 when collected and we send you this beautiful Signet Ring, warranted heavy gold finish, very stylish, not the cheap kind. SIGNET RING CO., Dept. 32, TOPEKA, KANSAS.

FORTUNE TOLD — Mysteries of life unveiled. Three 2c stamps and birthdate brings wonderful reading. Prof. Millet, Box 725, St. John's, Newfoundland

You Can Have this Table for 3 Cents a Day!

This Advertisement is Addressed to YOU Regardless of Your Position

It is just as important to the family whose income is $6.00 a week as to those whose income is $6,000 a year.

It makes no difference where you live, or how you are employed, we want you to know the best way—**the new way** of buying home furnishings.

We now have over a million customers. Most people who write for and read our catalog become our customers, because they find that ours is the most profitable—the most dignified way of shopping by mail.

3c A DAY for this splendid pedestal extension table. It is made of selected kiln dried solid oak of beautiful grain, finished a rich shade of golden with high gloss. Pedestal extra heavy, 8 in. in diameter, handsomely turned and fluted. Carved legs cut from 3½-in. stock. Top 42 in. in diameter with heavily molded, shaped rim.

For 3c a Day you may have the beautiful table illustrated at the top of this advertisement. It will be a pleasure in your home. Made of selected, seasoned oak, and legs are artistically carved. Your local dealer would have to ask about double for this same table.

For 5c a Day you can have the beautiful bed and very serviceable kitchen cabinet shown here. The bed is large and roomy, can be furnished in any solid color and the price includes a serviceable mattress and woven wire springs. The kitchen cabinet is made of hard wood with oak front and is nicely finished. This is a fine piece of furniture and cannot be bought at a retail store at anywhere near our price.

For 12½c a Day you can have all the articles illustrated in this advertisement. This includes the table—the bed outfit—the kitchen cabinet—and the famous Empire steel range. All of these articles are of the very best workmanship and we guarantee that our price will save you up to 50%.

We Sell Everything on Charge Account

Our business is conducted on an original "charge account" plan. Don't confuse this plan with the old style "installment plan." It is different. We have charge accounts with over a million satisfied customers all over America, in all walks of life including:

Plumbers
Farmers
Seamstresses
[illegible]
Telegraphers
Draymen
Switchmen
Painters
Bricklayers
Superintendents
Laborers
Teachers
Firemen
Printers
Doctors
Housewives
Carpenters
Railroad Men
Foremen
Etc., Etc., Etc.

So you see, this business is "a business for the people." We sell to all classes and everyone is welcome to an open charge account for whatever they require or desire.

A Year to Pay Our customers take an average of twelve months to pay for what they buy. Some take longer—some less—depending upon the amount of their purchases. There is no interest to pay, no notes to sign, no contract or mortgage, no extra charge of any kind. Our "charge account" prices are the same as for cash.

You will be surprised to learn what a few pennies will do toward making your home pleasant, comfortable, and beautiful. We handle furniture and home furnishings of every kind and description. All are bargains—some are surplus stocks picked up at auction or receiver's sales, or from makers who were compelled to sell.

The World's Greatest Home Furnishers There is no village so small—no spot so remote—that has not had our Home Lovers Bargain book. We do not employ salesmen—investigators or collectors. Our business is handled entirely by mail—direct with our customers—and in the strictest of confidence. This policy has built this—the largest business of its kind in the world.

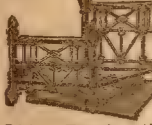
Do Not Buy From Pictures We do not ask our customers to buy from pictures or descriptions. They see the goods themselves—they use them in their homes and if they are pleased and decide to buy they do so—if not they return them and we pay the freight both ways.

Perhaps you would like to see the table, the kitchen cabinet, or steel range shown in this advertisment, or a rug, a pair of lace curtains, or you may be interested in a diamond, a watch, a necklace, or a bracelet. It doesn't make any difference what you want—or where you live. WE TAKE ALL RISK OF SATISFYING YOU.

Our Home Lovers Bargain Book FREE

We want you to refer to our catalog whenever you think of home furnishings. It tells all about our plan of selling goods on charge account—it explains our 30 day free trial—it tells about our wonderful organization—how we undersell retailers and all other mail order houses. It shows accurate pictures of high grade furniture and home furnishings. You will find remarkable bargains on every page that you will be interested in. Write for the catalog—now—to-day—before you forget it. It will be sent free. Your copy is waiting your request. Unless you write for it now—while you are reading this advertisement, you may forget it. (Better read that last sentence again.)

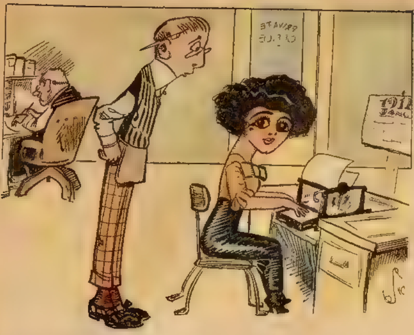
Spiegel, May, Stern Co.
1723 W. 35th Street, Chicago, Illinois



2½c a Day buys this high grade iron bed, with fine cotton top mattress and woven wire springs. Can be furnished in any solid color.

STEEL Range for 4½c a Day. Made in our famous Empire factory. One of the greatest ranges ever built. Other styles and sizes also.

Kitchen Cabinet for 2½c a Day. Hardwood, oak front, nicely finished, 69 inches high, 42 inches long, latticed glass doors.



Typewriter—I think the boss ought to raise my salary. I am saving him a whole lot of trouble.
Bookkeeper—How?
Typewriter—I've refused three times to marry him

Not Towser's Nose.

"How cold your nose is!"

These words came from the daughter of the house, who was sitting in the parlor with her beau

"Is Towser in the parlor again?" demanded her mother from the next room

There was a long pause.

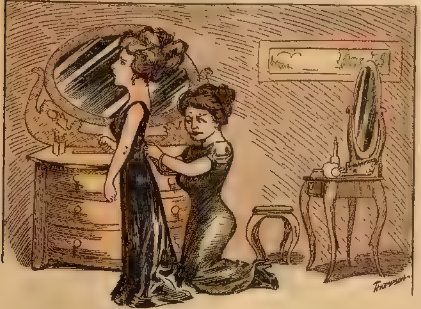
"No, mother; Towser isn't in the parlor"

And then silence resumed its reign

Not Hungry.

A country merchant having procured a new clerk, woke him up the next morning after he was hired at a most unseasonably early hour, by calling out that the family were sitting down at the table

"Thank you," said the boy, as he turned himself over in bed to adjust himself for a new nap—"thank you, but I never eat anything during the night."



Visitor—Didn't I see you coming from your neighbor's just now? I thought you were on very bad terms with her.
Hostess—We are—we don't speak to each other. We do, however, hook each other up the back!

Devotion.

Mrs. Wilgus—I learn that your daughter has decided to enter a convent and devote herself to the Lord.

Mrs. Bilgus—She did intend to, but her former lover, Mr. Saphead, suddenly returned last night, and she has decided to enter his home, and devote herself to him.

A Mean Man.

"The meanest man I ever knew was Closefist. He smoked his cigars to the last half inch, chewed the stumps, and used the ashes for snuff Then he wasn't satisfied, and gave up smoking."

"What for?"

"He couldn't think of any way of utilizing the smoke."

One Count Too Much.

Daughter—I can't marry that man He's bad.

Mother—My dear, think how very very rich——

Daughter—In his youth he killed a man

Mother—Youth can be forgiven many follies Think how rich——

Daughter—Once he stole forty thousand dollars, and his father had to pay it

Mother—That was all hushed up Think how rich——

Daughter—He is an awful drunkard.

Mother—Many gentlemen drink a little, my dear, and I'm sure he can afford——

Daughter—He says you are old and awkward

Mother—The wretch! He shan't see you again

At the Judgment Bar.

"Patrick, the Widow Maloney tells me that you stole one of her finest pigs. Is it correct?"

"Yis, your riverence."

"What have you done with it?"

"Killed it and ate it, your riverence."

"Oh, Patrick, Patrick! When you are brought face to face with the widow and the pig on the great judgment day, what account will you be able to give of yourself when the widow accuses you of stealing?"

"Did you say the pig would be there, your riverence?"

"To be sure, I did."

"Well, then, your riverence, I'd say 'Mrs. Malone, there's your pig'"

Practicing.

An amateur charity worker, visiting a family in the tenement district was alarmed to see the mother dash a cup of cold water in the face of the baby she had just finished dressing.

Too polite to express her amazement, the visitor held her breath, expecting the air to be rent with screams. When none came, the child merely whimpering she said, "Dear me, I should think he'd object more than that."

"Wouldn't ye now?" said the fond mother admiringly; "sure I've been practicing on him for three weeks. He won't yell when he's baptized next Sunday' He'll be used to it."

Wanted a Wife.

Miss Antique—You ought to get married, Mr Oldchapp

Mr. Oldchapp (earnestly)—I have wished many times lately that I had a wife

Miss Antique (delighted)—Have you really?

Mr Oldchapp—Yes. If I had a wife, she'd probably have a sewing machine, and the sewing machine would have an oil can, and I could take it and oil my office chair. It squeaks horribly

Settling the Question.

Here is a kindergarten lesson in a Massachusetts school

"Oh, mamma, come quick! Here's a bee buzzing 'round me!"

"Don't stir, my dear. It is probably a stingless one."

"But how am I to tell, mamma?"

"Wait a moment, dear. Let it settle on your hand. Then you'll know."

No Cause for Alarm.

Mother (alarmed)—Why does Jack make those queer sounds? Is he choking?

Young Wife—If he is, it is on the diamond ring I am trying to make him cough up for me

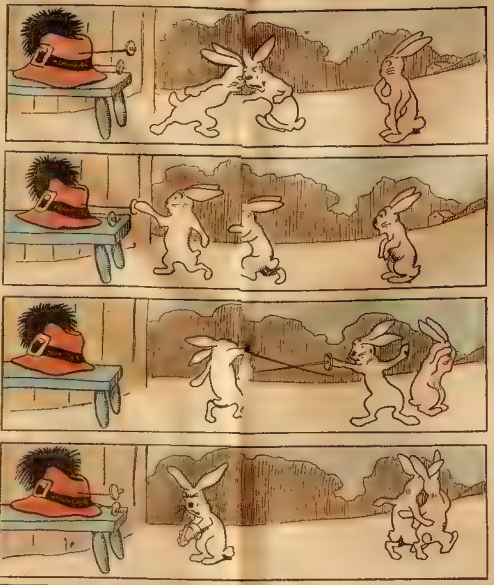
Bronson's Method.

"Bronson has gone to Europe for his health

"How did he lose his health?"

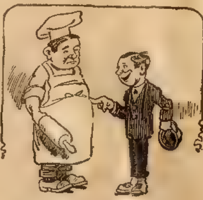
"Earning the money to go to Europe."

THE BLOY DUEL.



Sure to See Her.

Caller—Is Mrs Brownston at home?
Servant—Yes'm She'll be at home all the evening It's my night out



Village Baker—Ever had any experience in a bakery?
Apprentice—Yes, and the pie tops I used to make were durable enough to be used for chair seats.

A Tiny Hint.

"Does I have to give my name and address if I buys dis here razor?"

"You certainly do," replied the salesman.

"Well, while you's waitin' you might as well take down Mistah Rufus Blossom's name an' address, too, 'cause when I gits thro' wif dis razor he ain't g'ineter be able to give 'em."

Revenge.

"That fellow cut me in a very underhanded way."

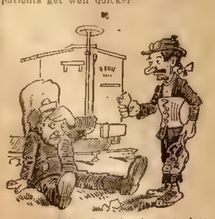
"Yet you are going to the wedding?"

"Yes. I may get a chance to soak him with an old shoe."

A Shrewd Physician.

"But it seems to take all your patients a long time to get well, doctor."

"Yes, but as soon as I begin to get a large practice I can afford to let my patients get well quicker."



Walker Hike—De lady gimme a piece of angel cake and a pair of old shoes.
Toddle Awn—Which are yer goin' t' eat?

Close Range.

A young man who is going to spend part of the winter in the South, and who expects to do some shooting while there, went into a hardware store one day last week to buy a gun.

"I am going after big game," he told the salesman, "wild cats, deer and bear."

"Then you want a good gun," said the clerk, "and I have just the thing. Here's one that we will guarantee to kill a bear at three miles."

Taking the gun in his hands, and turning it over and over in a gingerly manner, the young man stammered:

"B-b-but isn't three miles pretty close to get to a bear?"

One on the Supervisor.

The supervisor of a school was trying to prove that children are lacking in observation.

To the children he said: "Now, children, tell me a number to put on the board."

Some child said "thirty-six." The supervisor wrote sixty-three.

He asked for another number, and seventy-five was given. He wrote sixty-seven.

When a third number was asked, a child who apparently had paid no attention called out

"Theventy-theven. Change that, you darned thucker!"

Seven Miles Down.

A traveling man who drove across the country to a little town in Western Kansas met a farmer hauling a wagonload of water

"Where do you get water?" he asked.

"Up the road about seven miles," the farmer replied

"And you haul water seven miles for your family and stock?"

"Yep

"Why, in the name of sense, don't you dig a well?" asked the traveler.

"Because it's just as fur one way as the other, stranger"

Too Much Iron.

Doctor—Did you get that mixture of wine and iron that I ordered?

Deacon Waters—Yes; it was first-rate. Never enjoyed a bottle of medicine better in my life. Drank it up without takin' breath. But, doctor, there was too much iron in it

Doctor—H'm! So I should imagine

Deacon Waters—Yes, the iron all went to my feet and made 'em so heavy I could hardly walk

Excusable.

On one occasion Governor Dick Oglesby went down to Joliet to inspect the State prison, and in one of the cells he found a very ugly man. "How did you get in here?" asked Oglesby.

"Abduction," was the reply; "I tried to run off with a girl, and they caught me."

"I'll pardon you as soon as I get back to Springfield," said the Governor; "I don't see how you could expect to get a wife any other way."

A Pushing Agent.

Peddler—Please, mum, I'm sellin' a polish to clean silver.

Housekeeper (sharply)—Don't want none.

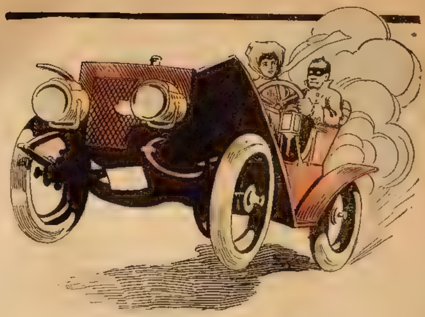
Peddler—Very sorry, mum, but I see the neighbors was right. They said there was no use callin' here 'cause you didn't have no silver.

Housekeeper (wildly)—Gimme six boxes.

A Worrying Woman.

"You say she worries herself unnecessarily over trifling things?" said one of two women who were speaking about the ways of another.

"Worries?" was the answer. "Why, she's more trouble to herself than a family of children!"



Clarice—Whee! This is fine, isn't it?
Clarence—It's sure to be if a cop sees us

A Young Man's Concession.

"I'm afraid," her father replied, "you would not be able to support my daughter in the style to which she has become accustomed."

"Well," the young man said, after he had thought the matter over briefly, "I'm not proud. I'll let you help."

A Female Wonder.

Figg—As a talker, Brown's wife is certainly a wonder.

Fogg—Right you are! Wonders never cease.

That Easy Feeling.

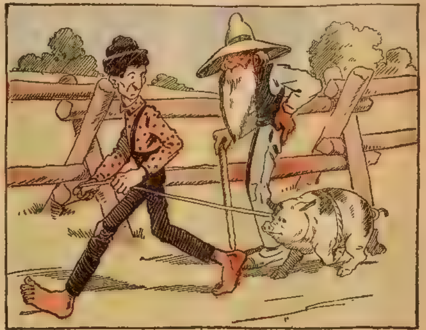
"The Gibsons are in easy circumstances, I believe

"Yes. They can owe people money and feel easier about it than any others with whom I have ever had anything to do."

Good Milk.

The returned fresh-air kid was telling his mother of the wonders of the country.

"And say, ma," he said, "out at Angola they get milk from cows and it's just as good milk as any



Patriarch—When I was a young feller I used to put a 200-pound pig on my back and walk off with him.
Youth—I tried that once, but he made so much noise that they caught me before I got half way home with him.

Time to Cool Off.

Proud Father—My old friend, I called to see if you couldn't make a place for my son in your establishment. He has just graduated with high honors.

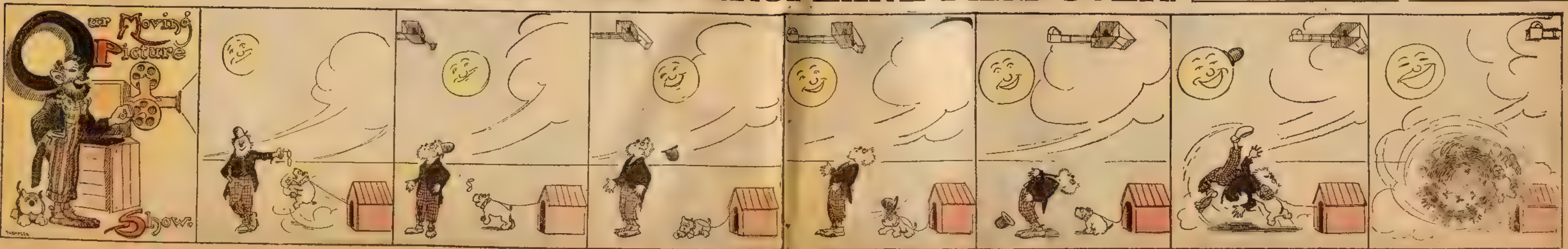
Old Friend—My dear old boy, nothing would please me better. Tell him to call around in two years.

Encouraging His Patients.

The Young Doctor—They tell me you are noted for encouraging your patients.

The Successful Old Doctor—Yes. Many of my wealthiest patients think they are sick when there is nothing the matter with them—and I always encourage them.

HE SAW THE AEROPLANE PASS OVER.


Our Moving Picture Show.

Marrying a Title;

Or, LOVE THAT TRIUMPHED

By Weldon J. Cobb

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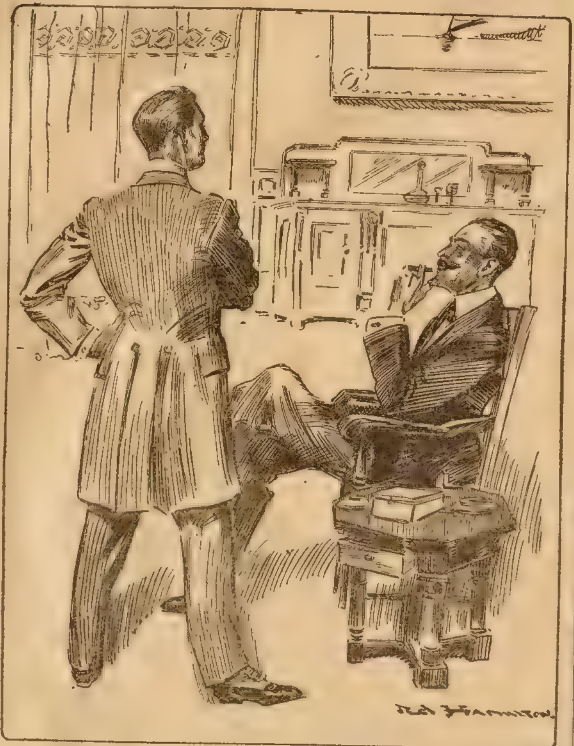

"My word is my bond," declared De Blauvois.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PLOTTERS.

"ONE moment, Count."

"With pleasure, monsieur."

John Vansant led the way from his countingroom to his own private office, suave and deferential as was he always to his titled client, but yet with a slight shade of annoyance and distrust on his face.

"Be seated, Count," he said courteously. "I wish to mention a little matter of business."

"Ah, indeed," bowed the foreigner, with his inevitable indolent smile.

"Do you remember indorsing a check for a friend of yours passing through Irondale about a week ago?" inquired the banker.

The Count twirled his mustachios reflectively, and took the trouble to think.

"It is difficult to recall trifles," he said, finally.

"But this is no trifle, Count," insisted Mr. Vansant. "It is a matter of $4,000. The man's name was Gabriel Ducro."

"My former valet; I remember well," said the Count. "He chanced to meet me on his way to secure a large patrimony in California, he told me. He had a check on a Southern bank. Yes, I recall that the sum was $4,000, as you name. A trusty fellow. I was glad of his good fortune, and equally glad to accommodate him with my signature."

"I am sorry, Count," said Mr. Vansant, "but the check has been returned to us marked 'no funds.'"

"You amaze me!" exclaimed the Count, betraying either real or well-affected concern and surprise. "There must be some mistake."

"There is none, positively," declared the banker, "for we were telegraphed particulars. The maker of the check is unknown at the bank. There is little doubt in my mind that Ducro has swindled you."

The Count de Blauvois looked infinitely bored and aggrieved.

"Then my trust in a former valued employe was misplaced," he said. "I will make up the delinquency, monsieur, from my own account. Ah, but I cannot. I have but $2,000 left of my original deposit."

"About that, Count."

"Then I will send for additional funds to my Paris friends," said the foreigner. "I could draw on my French bankers, but it would be to use the syndicate capital, and that I must not do for personal obligations. May I confide in you, monsieur?" inquired the Count mysteriously.

"Surely, my dear Count."

"It is this," proceeded the Count, gravely. "I do not hesitate to tell you that I have been something of a spendthrift in the past. My parents, therefore, have placed me on an allowance of $20,000 a year until I settle down and marry, when I receive a large share of the family estate."

"I understand."

"I could cable my family for funds, but they would misunderstand. I will write and explain my predicament, which will prove all satisfactorily. A reply will come within three weeks. I will simply anticipate my next quarterly installment, due next month."

"No, no, Count," the banker hastened to say. "I would not think of putting you to all that trouble. Let the matter rest until your regular installment comes."

"But at least I will give you my note," suggested the Count

"Not necessary with a close friend like you," insisted the banker, with an expansive, fatherly smile. "I only hope," added Vansant, significantly, "that as time goes on our relations may become, ah—hum!—even closer."

"Sir," exclaimed the Count, effusively, "you do me a great honor!"

He left the banker with a grateful pressure of the hand, and as he came out upon the street, he remarked in an undertone to himself: "A narrow escape! It is time for me to act with decision."

The Count walked thoughtfully around the square in the direction of the Vansant mansion. Blanche saw him from the veranda, where she was reading in a hammock. She made room for her noble visitor with her most bewitching smile

She had hoped he would soon come to see her. Ever since, a few evenings previous, a sudden malevolent idea had suggested itself to her fertile mind through noticing the game of cards in which the Count and Lionel Marsden had engaged. She was too shrewd a woman not to have observed that invariably the Count won. She noted also that he manipulated the cardboards with the skill of a practiced gamester.

At the present the conversation glided into generalities, but finally Blanche touched upon the subject closest to her thoughts and purposes.

"Count," she said, winningly, "I have noticed that you are an adept at cards."

"It is an accomplishment of my nation," he explained.

"I have something to say to you of considerable personal interest," proceeded Blanche. "Can I make of you a friend, a confidant?

"It would be to me the greatest honor," declared the Count, with an ardent glance at the lovely face so near to his own.

"You may think me capricious, willful," continued Blanche, "but I am very greatly aggrieved at an insult offered me in the past."

"An insult!" exclaimed the Count, rousing himself in profound interest and indignation. "To you? Ah, who would dare?"

"A man you have met, a man whom social etiquette demands I treat courteously, but the memory of a past affront rankles with me, all the same"

"Name the miscreant!" pleaded the Count. "The duel shall decide who is the better man."

"No, no!" dissented Miss Vansant, earnestly. "I thank you for your chivalrous valor, but that would not do at all in this country. Listen! The man I allude to is Lionel Marsden. A long time ago he professed to care for me. He was rejected as a suitor and has twice boasted that his was the act of dismissal."

"I will have his heart's blood!" declared the valiant Count.

"There is a better revenge, and it will please me more than a senseless quarrel, bringing scandal and publicity. I wish secretly to humiliate this man. It would be sweet revenge to drag him and his family down from the proud social position they imagine they occupy."

"Name your plan," spoke the Count. "You will assist me?"

"My queen! Ask my life, and I would give it to you!"

The impassioned words committed the Count to a proposal, as he had planned in his mind before making the present visit. An hour later he left the mansion the accepted suitor of its queenly mistress

An hour later, too, Blanche had committed him to lure Lionel Marsden into reckless gambling and pluck him; to involve him in debt and its complications—in fact, to ruin him

"I have won!" breathed the triumphant siren, as her visitor left the house.

A week later all Irondale society knew of the engagement of the titled foreigner to the daughter of the wealthy banker.

In a desolate attic room, Martin Blomer read the printed announcement of the event, and laughed fiercely, malignantly, with scorn.

"My revenge is near," he gloated, "and what a revenge!"

In far-away Brazil, at that hour, Florence Henderson was threading the intricate mazes of the wilderness, undaunted in the great motive of her life to find and save her imperiled lover.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ROSE OF HELL.

"Lost!" "It is true senorita." The native guide, Rodigo, looked hopelessly about a great expanse of woodland and

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then at the patient but perturbed girl by his side.

Florence, however, no longer bore to casual view the semblance of a woman. It had been at the suggestion of Rodigo, away back at the coffee plantation before starting out on their difficult journey, that she decided to adopt a garb and identity in keeping with the exigencies of the occasion. She had cropped her beautiful wealth of natural hair closely, had assumed the clothing of the average male tourist, and to all appearances was a venturesome boy, engaged on a mission of exploration or business, with Rodigo as a guide.

They had reached Matoi without difficulty. Here Florence had obtained sure evidence of the fact that Pedro Sanito and Rolfe Ashley had passed through that settlement forty-five days previous. It was after leaving this last outpost of civilization that the real rigors of the journey were experienced. Both of the wayfarers were armed, both were compelled to maintain a perpetual vigilance on account of savage natives and beasts.

Rodigo averred that he knew how to reach the sacred temples of the Vasco, where it was believed Pedro conveyed Rolfe Ashley. They had covered many a league since leaving Matoi. Now fairly within the district from which all intruders were excluded at the risk of life, the second day after crossing to the south bank of the Amazon River, the guide acknowledged that he was at fault as to their bearings, and in fact, that they were lost.

"There is only one thing for us to do," he advised.

"And what is that?" inquired Florence.

"I will try to retrace the trail."

"Alone?"

"It is better so. The senorita is exhausted from the long tramp. I am a fleet runner, and you would be a hindrance to me while I am striving to regain our bearings."

"Will it take you long?"

"That all depends. Perhaps a few hours. At least by morning I will report again."

So it was arranged. Florence was averse to being left alone, but Rodigo arranged a platform of branches in a tree, portioned out the food supply, and saw his charge safely and comfortably bestowed before he undertook the back trail.

The sense of loneliness with Florence was depressing, at times almost terrifying, after the departure of the guide. She passed the night with no attacks from wild beasts, however, although many such roamed in her vicinity.

The next morning passed, then the entire day, and then night came again, and Florence began to fear that Rodigo had got lost, or had fallen a victim to the many perils of the district from man and beast. By the following morning she gave up all hope of his rejoining her. She could not remain longer where she was. The food supply had run out, and at that particular spot the water was brackish and unsafe, and only a few coarse nuts offered the means of satisfying her growing hunger.

Florence knew the general direction of the headquarters of the Vasco, she fancied. She determined to resume the journey alone. She scratched a message on a piece of bark at the tree where the guide had left her, and started forward on her journey.

For nearly four days the lonely wanderer trod the dense mazes of the landscape. It was with some satisfaction and hope that she came in sight of a stream one morning. This was evidently, a tributary of the Amazon, and by following it she might expect at least finally to reach the main river.

In all her wanderings Florence had not come across a single human being nor a definite trace of one. About noon that day, however, with a glad cry the lonely girl increased her gait, as she noted smoke rising from a little copse by the river side. She proceeded with more caution, as she realized that she might intrude upon some unfriendly savage encampment. Approaching the copse, Florence peered through the leafy screen of vines, and immediately her attention was fixed upon the scene beyond with curiosity and interest.

At the river bank a light rowing-boat was moored. On shore, a man arrayed in tourist costume lay prone on the ground near a small fire of leaves and twigs. He had a fine, intellectual face, but it was seared with traces of pain—thin, careworn, and fever-marked.

A dusky native was preparing a meal. He moved about as though every step was great suffering to him, and at a glance Florence decided that both were very sick men. The fact that the tourist was a white man induced her to venture to make herself known. She stepped into view, one hand raised above her head, which was the custom of the district to indicate a friendly disposition.

The man lying down on the ground greeted Florence with a surprised stare and roused, but weakly. The native reached for his spear.

"I have lost my way," said the girl, quickly, "and my guide. I have no food and am looking for friends."

The recumbent man stared at the soft, mellifluous accent of her tones, and viewed her keenly. It was possible that he pierced her disguise for he said gently and courteously:

"You are indeed welcome, although we may prove poor hosts."

"You are ill?" inquired Florence, solicitously.

"We are poisoned," answered the man.

"Poisoned?"

"Yes, I am Paul Desmond. I represent an international geographical society of England. They sent me up the Amazon to gather some data and to secure some rare specimens of the flora of the country. Unfortunately my guide and myself penetrated the bad lands of Avrinoco. You may not know it, but forty-eight hours of the influence of the air of that pestilential district is sure death. For half that period of time we ignorantly traversed the district. This is the result."

As he spoke the explorer indicated his own and the wan condition of his guide.

"A friendly native found us, nearly dead," proceeded the narrator. "He dragged us in our boat out of the poison zone. He told us, however, that unless we hastened back to Rio de Janerio, where skilled physicians would furnish an antidote, we were doomed."

Florence listened with marked attention to all this.

"How unfortunate," she murmured, commiseratingly.

"Yes, indeed," assented Desmond. "We were within ten days' journey of the final and most important mission of my trip—the rose of hell."

Florence stared strangely at the unusual words.

"The rose of hell?" she repeated, vaguely.

"Yes," replied the explorer. "You do not know what that is?"

"No."

"It is one of the rarest specimens known to flower lovers the world over," was the impressive reply.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE GOLDEN JAR.

Florence felt that her journeyings were leading her among strange experiences. Ill and wasted as was the explorer, there was a bright spark of enthusiasm in his eye as he alluded to the devoted purpose of his presence in Brazil.

"The rose of hell," he continued, seeing that Florence was an interested listener, "is a great rarity, even as it is found in Peru, its native soil. It has, however, become a sacrificial altar emblem of the Vasco. They have brought it through skilled treatment to a high order of development."

"What is it like?" inquired Florence.

"It is a jet-black rose of enormous size, blooming only at midnight, and exhaling a wonderful narcotic perfume so subtle, that almost insensibly its beholder sinks into a dream of the most extravagant and pleasing fancies. I cannot go back without one of these wonderful specimens. Yet what shall I do? I dare not return with the deadly poison of the bad lands in my system. Alas! Some other bold explorer will some day secure specimens of this regal flower, and rob me of the reward of all my peristent endeavor."

The speaker looked sad and distressed. Then he seemed to recall that Florence was their guest. His guide provided an ample meal. While they were partaking of it, Desmond became intent on learning the motive of the appearance of Florence in that remote district.

She thought it best to tell her entire story so far as her search for Rolfe Ashley was concerned. In Desmond she found a sympathetic and interested listener.

"You have related a remarkable story," said the explorer, in tones of the deepest admiration. "I wonder that you, a frail, inexperienced girl, should have been able to penetrate even thus far into the wilderness. Alas! You have before you still greater dangers and hardships."

"I must press on, all the same," declared Florence resolutely.

"It is at least fortunate that you have met us," proceeded the explorer. "We can direct you to your point of destination. We can warn you, so you may avoid a fatal journey through the bad lands."

On this theme the explorer talked for

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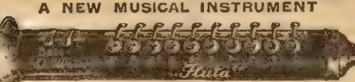

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some time. Then a thoughtful expression came over his face.

"An idea has occurred to me," he said, "that may be of material assistance to you in your efforts to reach your destination on Paros. Listen, if I can aid you to do so, would you endeavor to execute an important mission for me?"

"Oh, surely," answered Florence, with eagerness.

"It concerns the coveted flower I told you about."

"The rose of hell?"

"Yes. Why can you not try to secure for me some of the sacred seeds of the precious rose?"

"But can I find where the flower grows?"

"It grows somewhere in the Vasco district, in the temple of the Vasco. It is their developed flower only that I care for. I understand that they preserve in a golden jar on the altar of their main temple a number of the seeds of the flower for future planting."

"Even if I reached the temple, would I be able to enter it?" questioned Florence.

"I think I could direct you," replied Desmond. "One thing, at least, I can do. I can provide you with a safe conduct through all the district before you."

"A safe conduct?" repeated Florence, questioningly.

"A passport. I presume few people have ever had one, but as a scientific man I was able to obtain it through high Brazilian officials. I will make a bargain with you. I will give you the passport, provided you agree to take up my mission where I am forced to abandon it. While you are seeking for your lost friend, you can also strive to obtain for science the rose seeds."

That was the first of several conferences which the explorer held with Florence that day and the one ensuing.

It was a most fortunate circumstance for her that she had met Desmond. He mapped out her prospective route, he warned her of the perils ahead of her, and told her how to evade them. He arranged where she should report in Rio de Janeiro if she succeeded in obtaining the rose seeds and ever got back to civilization. Then he drew from his bosom a piece of metal attached to a wrist chain. The surface of the metal bore some strange cabalistic characters.

"Take this," he directed Florence. "Whoever of the natives you may meet in this district will respect that token as a safe conduct for you and for your companions. It will gain you assistance in prosecuting your journey. Were I in normal health, I would accompany you in your brave search for your imperiled friend."

The next morning the explorer and his guide started their boat down stream, and Florence was left alone to pursue her forlorn quest. She now had a very exact idea of her course and destination from what Desmond had told her. She had an opportunity to test the value of the safe conduct two days later. She came upon a lonely mountain hut, badly in need of food and rest, its occupants a native and his wife. Upon a sight of the token they showed her the utmost kindness and attention.

After that Florence had more than one encounter with natives. In every instance the safe conduct fulfilled the claims of the explorer. At length, one morning, she knew that she was within a few leagues of the great interior city of the Vasco.

She realized that she was now about to face the most perilous part of her adventure. From natives she had met and from Desmond she had gained a fairly good idea of the location of the Vasco temples and the manner in which they were environed. She knew that one great temple was held in high reverence by the natives. She realized that to penetrate its sacred precincts, or even to prosecute a casual search for Rolfe Ashley, would be difficult and would excite suspicion. Her success in thus far making her way into the interior, however, encouraged her greatly.

At length Florence gained a beaten roadway. It led to a little town, then to another. Twice she was taken in charge by natives who brought her before some native judge. The moment that dignitary discovered the safe conduct he was profuse in his civilities toward her.

Later Florence learned that some agreement existed between a large house in Rio de Janeiro buying diamonds from the natives, whereby any person carrying safe conduct was to be unmolested in the Vasco dominion. The native ruler feared that if he did not respect the token, he would be shut out from a market for the gems, which constituted a great portion of his royal reserve.

It was about noon, one day, that Florence entered a great tribal city. Her arrival produced nothing more than natural curiosity among the natives. She sought out a comfortable lodging. The place was in the midst of the great revelries of some national festival. This distracted attention from herself. That evening she strolled out to see what was going on, and followed a great procession wending it way to an enclosure on a hill near town.

In the white moonlight Florence made out a magnificent barbaric temple. For the occasion a large platform had been built out from one of its windows. Upon this a native priest appeared and went through some formalities, sprinkling sacred water from a receptacle of pure gold. Two attendants appeared, bearing immense candelabra surmounted by a hundred small wax candles.

As the light illumined the faces of these two attendants, Florence gave a gasp, a cry, and sank back, reeling and overcome. For in the two attendants so strangely garbed, the brave-hearted girl, who had fought all the perils of land and sea for this supreme moment of joy and delight, recognized—her father, long given up for dead, and her lover, Rolfe Ashley!

CHAPTER XIX.

IN BAD HANDS.

Plot and counterplot, Blanche Vansant found herself in her element to a greater degree than ever, as the wooing of the Count de Blauvois, progressed. Clever woman that she was, for once her shrewdness and subtlety were pitted against the ingenious schemes of a worthy opponent, and in her pride and self-confidence the wilful siren never dreamed it

The banker's daughter was not the far-seeing being she fancied herself to be, or she would have seen beyond the surface and have read between the lines. In revealing her vengeful feelings to the Count regarding the Marsdens, Blanche had given her titled fiance an advantage over her. Very quietly, like the knowing politic man he was, De Blauvois had accepted the hint that it would be a satisfaction to his lady-love to see the Marsdens humbled.

Her very admission of confidence in his ability as a gamester at cards, tacitly placing him on the level of a sharper, would have offended a man of refined sensibilities. Not so the Count. He smiled grimly to himself, and realized that he had won the game, more craftily laid out than the Vansants had ever dreamed.

It was diamond cut diamond now, for the suave, tactful foreigner, with nothing to lose and everything to gain. Without knowing it, Blanche Vansant was being led into a snare set by a hard, scheming villain, who had not one grain of gentleness or affection in his coarse, disguised nature.

De Blauvois was counting the days, for he foresaw that a time of reckoning was near. He was sure that the dazzling career that he was leading must sooner or later lead to a farcical unmasking. The $4,000 overdraft, the promised investment of the fabulous millions of his vaunted French syndicate—these and other tangled elements in his game must soon show some practical materialization or disaster would result.

Vansant, the banker, was supremely elated when he realized that his daughter had reached the acme of her ambitious designs and had secured a titled husband. So skilfully, so deftly had De Blauvois played his cards, that the banker, keen business man though he was, had been led to accept his representations of family and fortune as genuine. Vansant had gone to infinite trouble to interest the representative of millions of French capital in his promotions.

One special proposition was the great feature of the investments of the Irondale banker. This was a traction scheme that took in an undeveloped but promising section near Irondale. Many speculators had attempted to secure it. Even William Marsden had made efforts to control the project, but Vansant had been too quick and too shrewd for him.

At present, after an investment of over $200,000, Vansant acquired the balance of interest and power in the proposition. If the banker could secure large outside financial co-operation in the traction deal, he stood a chance to win millions eventually.

One point only blocked, or rather retarded, success in the enterprise. There was a mile of right of way that constituted the key to the entire situation. In the original deal, Vansant had technically acquired this and had paid for it. In some complicated way, however, his business rival, William Marsden, had got possession of the option.

Vansant had offered the capitalist twice the value of the option. The latter had simply laughed at him. Marsden acknowledged that in all justice the concession legally belonged to Vansant, but it rather pleased him to turn a sharp trick with his old-time partner, whom at heart he disliked intensely. The Count knew of this complication, and in his lofty, money-easy way had advised the purchase of the outstanding option at any price.

Meantime, De Blauvois was not idle in having lots of pleasure and feathering his own nest. From time to time strangers to the townspeople would appear at Irondale. They would become the temporary guest of the Count. He would introduce them as prominent men from various parts of the world whom he had met in his travels. To some of them he gave titles. Others he claimed were relatives of distinguished literary men and foreign diplomats.

One of these lingered in Irondale for quite some time. The Count introduced him as a titled Russian nobleman, and was constantly in his company. When they engaged in card playing, this man whom he called Duke Vaclav, was invariably his opponent. The Duke and Lionel Marsden were usually the opponents of De Blauvois and his partner.

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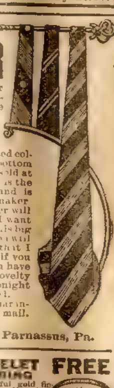

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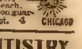

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Young Marsden was caught with the glamour of having the acquaintance and friendship of titled noblemen. Night after night the quartette met at the hotel apartments of De Blauvois, and outright and desperate gambling held high carnival until morning.

Without his suspecting it in the remotest degree, Lionel was being made the dupe of De Blauvois and his two accomplices. They played him with skill, caution, and patience. He was plied with wine freely. At times he was allowed to win large sums. On several occasions, when he had lost heavily and his resources seemed exhausted, his partner at cards liberally paid the double share due their opponents.

One evening at the end of a most exciting game, Marsden threw down his cards angrily. He was flushed and determined.

"Only for one misplay we would have beaten," he declared. "See here, Count, if I didn't already owe you a small fortune, I would ask you to take another note from me and continue the game."

"I am sorry, my dear friends," remarked De Blauvois, suavely, "but I have seriously crippled myself financially already, carrying you to the extent that I have."

"Yes, I realize and appreciate that," replied Marsden.

If there was some security you could offer," suggested the wily foreigner.

Lionel Marsden reflected.

"See here," he said finally, "if I put up some stock and bonds of my own, and I lose, will you agree to hold them as collateral for thirty days'."

"With pleasure," assented De Blauvois.

"Good! Come with me," directed Marsden, springing to his feet.

"Where?"

"To my father's office. See, I have the key to the safe."

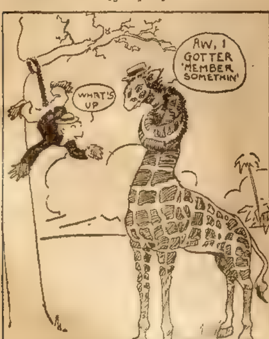
This capital story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Good Nature Pays.

The man who "gets mad" is disliked by everybody. His best friends "make allowances" for him, which in itself is a confession of his weakness of character. The man who smiles and keeps his temper at all times, even when beset by annoyances and provocations, elicits the admiration of others and wins their confidence and esteem. This good nature is really a business asset, and nowhere in the world is valued more highly than in this country. As a matter of fact it is a great deal easier for the good-natured fellow to go through the world than for the grouch or the touchy individual, who is always looking for slights and finding them where they do not exist, the Lafayette (Ind.) Courier remarks. Education in this characteristic seems to begin at school. The "smarty" who gets mad and won't play soon finds himself or herself an object of derision. And the teacher, too, who permits her temper to get the better of her soon loses the respect of pupils. So the common experience at school is to the effect that where many people are thrown into contact good nature must prevail. It may be that the general outward good nature here considered has its reaction in private and things are evened up in the privacy of the home. Perhaps there is more of this than we know, but, after all, on the whole it is likely that Americans are everywhere nearly if not quite as good-natured as they seem to be. Good nature pays in peace of mind, and in absence of regrets and also in dollars and cents in the matter of business dealings.

* * *


AW, I GOTTER 'MEMBER SOMETHIN'
WHAT'S UP

"Helping him to remember."

* * *

A Dutchman's Dog.

I hafe lost my dog. His name vas Bismarck, mit only vone eye, on accoundt of a old plack cat, vot pelongs to a serfant gals mit red-haired hair. Also he has only dree legs, on accoundt of mocolotif engines mitout any bull ketcher. He vas a dog, Bismarck vas. He vas paldt-headed all over himself, in gonsequence of red-hot vater, on accoundt of fighting mit a old maidt's cat. On vone end of himself vas skituated his head—und his tail it vas py de oder endt. He only carries apout vone half of his tail mit him, on accoundt of a circular sawmill. He looks a good deal more older as he is already, but he ain't quite so oldt as dot until de next Christmas.

De vay vot you can know him is, if you call him "Shack," he von't say notings, but he makes answers to de name "Bismarck" by saying "Pow-wow-wow!" und in de meantime vagging half of his tail—dot oder half vas cut off, so he can't, of course, shake it. Also, if you t'row some shtones on top of him, he vill run like de teufel, and holler "Ki yi! Ki yi!" Dot's de vay you can told my dog.

He looks like a cross petween a bullfoundlandt und a cat mit nine tails—but he ain't. He got not efen vone whole tail, und he ain't cross, not a bit.

Anoder vay vot you could told if it vas Bismarck is dot he vas almost a dwin. He vould pe half of a bair of dwins dot time, only dere vas dree of dem—a bair of dwins und a half. I peliefe dey calls dot a driplet.

Also he got scars on de top of his side, where he scratched himself mit a Thomas cat—but dot Thomas cat nefer recovered himself.

You can also tell Bismarck on accoundt of his vonderful inshtinct. He can outinshtinct any dog vhat you nefer saw in my life. For inshtance, if you pat him on top of his head mit a pavement shtones or de shtick of a proom, den he vill suspect right off dot you care not fery much apout him.

I t'ink after all dot's maype de best vay vot you can tell him—by his inshtinct. Everypody says he vas de most inshtinkest dog dot nefer vas.

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M. D. BETTS, Station 15, Jackson, Mich.

Out West Stories

(Continued from page three.)

"I said that when they first accused me," he replied dully.

"Why did you run away, then?" she demanded.

For an instant he was tempted. He recalled with a shudder the horror he had felt at first when Thorney had accused him, a horror that was magnified because in Jimmie's heart he was certain that Thorney himself had slain Brown. Jimmie had seen the two ride off together toward the foothills the night Tod was shot. He had been on the point of accusing his friend, even before he himself had been accused, but he thought he had surprised Lettie's secret, that she loved the older man, and Jimmie had kept silent because he did not want to hurt her. For the same reason he kept silent now. He turned away from Lettie's pleading face and spoke to Thorney.

"Well, I reckon we'd better go on to the house. You can telephone Henderson and Martin you've got me." He smiled sarcastically. "A pessimist might say this is a good lesson to teach folks to mind their own business, and not go to one side to save other folks' babies."

Lettie stared at him. Two shots rang out in quick succession. A bullet whistled past Thorney's head. He leaped to one side, drawing his revolver at the same instant, and leveling it at Jimmie. The cowboy sat motionless in the saddle. His hands had not moved. He smiled at Thorney's perplexed look. A shout from the other side of the track told them where the bullet had come from. Red Martin and Henderson were approaching, dragging between them the Indian, mortally wounded by a bullet from the sheriff's forty-four.

"Just got here in time, Colonel," Henderson explained, as he dropped Johnson with little ceremony. "We thought the redskin was a man we were looking for, and followed him. He was taking good aim at your heart when we shot first. Maybe he's not too dead to tell us why he had it in for you."

Red Martin's startled exclamation at sight of Jimmie caused them to forget the Indian. Jimmie held out his hands toward the sheriff: "Reckon you'd better put the cuffs on me, Bill. You've got me now."

The sheriff stared. The Indian struggled to his feet and tried to get at Thorney, growling in savage hate: "Huh, I get you next time! Twice I try and you get away. You not escape next time."

"There ain't going to be any next time for you," Henderson replied, roughly, as he pushed the struggling man back to the ground.

"What does he mean by twice?" Lettie looked at Thorney.

"Ugh," continued the Indian, with rapidly failing strength. "I tell you." He glared at Lettie. "You fool. You think the man you didn't marry he kill Brown. I kill him, when I'm young brave and foolish. I think I get your man. I make damn big mistake." Thorney went closer and the Indian glared at him. "Bah, Gray Hawk's son will get you yet. You fool!" He fell back gasping.

"Oh, did you hear him?" Lettie grabbed the sheriff's hands, "did you hear him?" She turned to Jimmie. "Oh, Jimmie, he's proved you are not guilty. I knew it!"

They turned from the dying Indian to Jimmie.

"Why didn't you say so, my boy," Colonel Thorney asked reproachfully.

"I—I thought you shot him," Jimmie stammered. "I saw you go out with Tod that night, and when I found out that you—that Lettie——"

"Who is he, Colonel," Henderson interrupted, "and what'd he have it in for you about?"

"I killed his father, Chief Gray Hawk, about twelve years ago, in a cattle raid," Thorney explained, "and his boy swore to kill me. I knew that, but I never knew Tom Thunderface Johnson was the son."

The Indian's effort had been his last. Red Martin, seeing he was dead, exclaimed: "Well, I'm glad he cleared Jimmie first!"

They walked toward the house, Thorney telling Jimmie that he must remain and take his half of the ranch. Jimmie shook his head, but refused to tell why he could not remain. Near the house he stopped to tell them good-by.

"I think I'll go back to Nebraska," he explained. Little Lettie, who had gone ahead, came running toward them. Jimmie jumped her into the air, kissed her, and handed her to Lettie. "Well, little one, good-by. Don't forget Jimmie. I'm turning you over to your daddy and mother, and I hope they'll take better care of you."

"Oh," the girl laughed, "this isn't my mother. Didn't you know it was my auntie? I thought everybody knew Auntie Lettie."

Jimmie looked from Colonel Thorney to the woman he thought was the Colonel's wife.

"But—I thought," he stammered, "I thought—you married Lettie."

"No," Thorney answered, "it was Lettie's oldest sister, Mary. You've never seen her, but you will in a few hours. She's due back from Caryville about sunset."

Jimmie followed them into the house, dazed, hopeful, wondering. Thorney took little Lettie to the rear of the house, leaving them alone. Jimmie and Lettie looked at each other.

"Well," said the teacher.

"Well," Jimmie grinned, "shall we wipe the last six years off the slate and start where we left off?"

"No," she laughed softly, "not exactly there, Jimmie. You hadn't said enough."

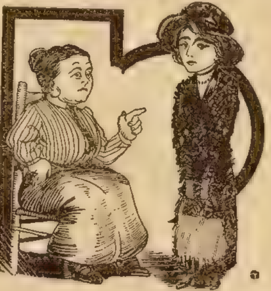
"I'll make up for it now," Jimmie retorted.

Three months later, when Jimmie and his wife returned to the P. J. ranch from their honeymoon, he remarked as they drove from Benson:

"This is slightly different from my last return. Then I was a man without a name and without a home. Now, why, now I've got everything a man has any business wanting."

In next week's Ledger will appear another "Out West" story, called "The Crooked Trail." Readers will find this series of stories strong and dramatic; they depict the lives and fortunes of real red-blooded men and women. They will continue for several weeks; don't miss any of them.

* * *



"When I was of your age, Alice, the men swarmed around me like flies around a jar of honey."

"It's remarkable, auntie, that no one of them stuck to the jar!"

* * *

Health and Beauty.

Health and physical beauty are more nearly synonymous than is generally believed. The ancient Greeks strove to attain physical perfection—beauty of figure and of face—by means of exercises, baths and every means known to them for stimulating the bodily functions to a high degree of health. They were intense admirers of physical beauty, and appreciated the fact that health is one of its prime conditions. The modern science of hygiene teaches that the observance of certain laws is necessary for the evolution of the growing boy and girl into the healthy man and woman. Prominent among these laws is that of personal cleanliness. To obtain and to retain a healthy and active condition of the skin, frequent bathing is necessary, followed by active friction with a brush or towel. It should be remembered that the skin is an excretory organ; that material which has been expelled through it collects upon its surface, and must be removed.

The skin also secretes an oily matter, which keeps it moist, flexible, and healthy. This is partially removed by bathing, and the healthy secretion is again stimulated by active rubbing. To attain a good development of the muscles, physical exercise must be taken. The growing boy and girl should have a fixed time of exercise, either at home or at school, as well as for study, for eating, and for sleep. The athletic trainer tells his pupils that temperance in all things is necessary for even a fair degree of physical development; he insists upon regularity in exercising, eating, and sleeping. Such a temperate and regular method of living should be the aim of every one. In that sense of the word, every one should keep himself in training. This is especially important in youth, when not only are habits forming, but the foundations of future ill or good health are being laid. And the means by which health is best attained are the same means by which one's personal appearance is best improved.

* * *

Insulted.

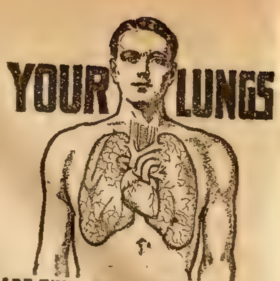
A strapping German, with big beads of perspiration streaming down his face, was darting in and out the aisles of a Philadelphia department store.

His excited actions attracted the attention of all the salespersons, and they hardly knew what to make of it. A hustling young man of the clothing department walked up to him and asked: "Are you looking for something in men's clothing?"

"No, he roared, "not men's clothing—vimmen's clothing. I can't find my wife!"

* * *

And many a man who believes in doing the greatest good to the greatest number regards number one as the greatest number.



ARE THEY WEAK OR PAINFUL?

Do your lungs ever bleed?
Do you have night sweats?
Have you pains in chest and sides?
Do you spit yellow and black matter?
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Do you have pains under your shoulder blades?

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Hunting a Firebug

(Continued back from page twenty-five.)

twenty feet under ground. Not much danger of his resurrection, is there, Olivia?"

"How frightful!"

"Rather. Billy Gabbs was along, and he thought at first that his chum had been killed by a drop into the old well. He searched for himself, and was finally satisfied that Till was not there. The fat boy is even now searching the woods to find his lost chum. He may decide to dig into the filled well. If he does, of course, the body will be found, in which case it will be sent home."

The woman shuddered, giving a faint cry.

"I—I hope there'll be nothing like that. Let the poor boy rest where he is. It is far better so."

"I am of that opinion myself, Olivia."

"What will folks at large think?"

"Just give it out that Till has run away, which will settle that. People know the boy wasn't very well treated at home, and will think it the most natural thing in the world for him to run away."

This suggestion seemed to please the woman, since she caught at it with a sigh of genuine relief.

"Providence, you see," continued the man, "has played into your hands."

"Yes, it does seem like it, Abraham."

"And now what will you do, Mrs Trodden?"

"What will I do? Nothing."

"That may be all right, but I am to be considered, Olivia."

"You, Abe! My goodness, what have I to do with your affairs, Abraham Flight? I have spent too much money on you already. You get no more——"

"Tut, tut, Olivia," with a sodden laugh, "this is not the end of the matter by any means! There was a will, you know."

"That is an exploded theory, Abe."

"Without this will all the vast property belonging to the late Grantford Bunker went to his nearest of kin, Olivia Horne, daughter of the old man's niece. You, therefore, being his grandniece—for the grandson being dead has no claim—inherited all. So it was decided by law, eh, Olivia?"

"You know it all, so why repeat, Abraham?"

"I won't. You kept the boy well out of sight. Now that incubus is removed you feel easy. But you see, there was a will."

"Even if there was, what of it now?"

"Now that the boy is dead you imagine the will, even if there was one, is of no force?"

"Why should it be?"

"The heirs of Moses Bunker would inherit."

"He has no heirs."

"So you say. I know better."

"You do?"

The woman turned upon him now with a sudden interest.

"You speak in riddles," she said. "The elder Bunker had but one heir, without a will. With one, and the property left to Moses, I still inherit, if he has died, as you tell me he has."

Flight gave forth a jeering laugh.

"All right," he said, "think as you choose, Olivia Horne. I shall proceed to have the last will and testament of Grantford Bunker put to probate, when we shall see if you are the only bun in the batch. I know a thing or two——"

"Is there really a will, Abraham?"

The speaker's voice was husky with emotion. He had at last touched her in a vital spot. He knew his power, and was none too good to use it.

"There is a will, Olivia, and it is in my possession. What more do you wish to know?" Cool and calculating came the words. He seemed to feel that he had this scheming woman in his power, and was resolved to use that advantage to the limit.

"I wish to see the will."

"Come with me and you shall."

"Where, Abraham?"

"To a house not far away——"

"Not tonight," she cried, starting suddenly to her feet. "I must return home now. I will see you again." When she would have gone, however, he detained her with a clutch on the arm.

"It is now or never, Olivia," he grated. "My home has been laid in ruins because of the now dead heir to the big Bunker fortune. I must be suitably rewarded, else I touch off a mine, that, once exploded, will bury you and your precious husband in the ruins. Choose which it shall be."

"What must I do?"

"Pay me fifty thousand dollars for the will, which you can destroy, thus making you safe forever," was his cool rejoinder.

"Give me time——"

"Not an hour. Tonight or never. I will accompany you home and get the money."

"That would be folly; I have no such amount in the bank. However, come home with me, show me the will, and I will then decide what to do."

She turned away, he following her from the place. Scarcely had they quitted the spot than a form rose from the ground and walked into the glow of an electric lamp—that glow revealed the pale and startled face of Till Trodden!

The continuation of this extraordinary story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. Read it! If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year

* * *

Patronize Dentist.

Jonathan Drew, who resides on the outskirts of Pekin, Ind., had a curious experience the other day.

Jonathan developed a toothache that made him sit up and take notice. He tried various remedies without avail and finally went to the dentist. Jonathan asked the dentist how much he would charge to yank the aching molar, and the dentist told Jonathan 50 cents, which was his regular rate.

Now Jonathan is a practitioner of economy even in the matter of having an aching tooth pulled, so he tried to beat the dentist down to a quarter, but the forceps artist refused to cut rates.

"Very well," said Jonathan, "then I'll let the blamed tooth ache—if the tooth can stand it, I can." So Jonathan went back home with his face in his hand.

That evening the molar got down to business in earnest—and he stepped lively, too. At last he could stand the exquisite pain no longer, so he tied one end of a piece of picture wire to the tooth and the other end to a stone weighing about five pounds.

Then he stood before a window, with his mouth open and his eyes shut, counted three and threw the stone—which went through the window and struck Abe Winslow, a neighbor, a terrific wallop on the head. Incidentally the wire broke and the aching tooth still staid pat.

After Abe had regained consciousness he invited Jonathan to step out into the street a minute, as he had something important to say to him. Like a lamb to the slaughter, Jonathan went, and Abe gave Jonathan what was probably one of the worst lickings a resident of Pekin ever had visited upon him.

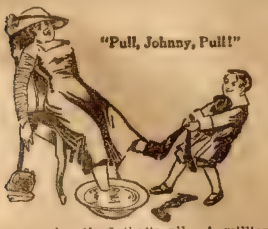
Jonathan is now suffering not only from the toothache, but the faceache, and his face aches so that he is hardly conscious of the toothache.

This little incident teaches that when we have toothache we should not try to compete with a first-class dentist.

So Tired of Tired Feet! Use TIZ

Gets the "Tired" Out in a Few Minutes. Makes Your Feet Sore-Proof.

"O fudge! It's awful how tired feet make you feel tired all over—so dead tired. Then, when you've got a corn besides, and a bunion, and a few blisters, and your feet are terribly swollen, you don't care if you've got a million dollars—you're tired that's all. A million dollars can't help you, any more than 25 cents will."


"Pull, Johnny, Pull!"

A quarter buys a box of TIZ—a wonder for tired, sore, tender, chafed, blistered, swollen, sweaty, smelly feet, corns, callouses and bunions, chilblains and frostbite. The moment you use it, you give a sigh of relief, and then you smile. There's nothing as good as TIZ, so don't accept any attempted imitation. TIZ draws out all the poisonous exudations that make foot troubles.

TIZ, 25 cents a box, sold everywhere, or sent direct, on receipt of price, by Walter Luther Dodge & Co., Chicago, Ill. Recommended by all Drug Stores, department and general stores.

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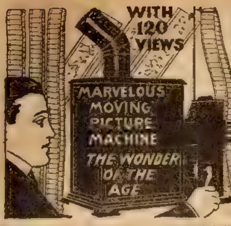

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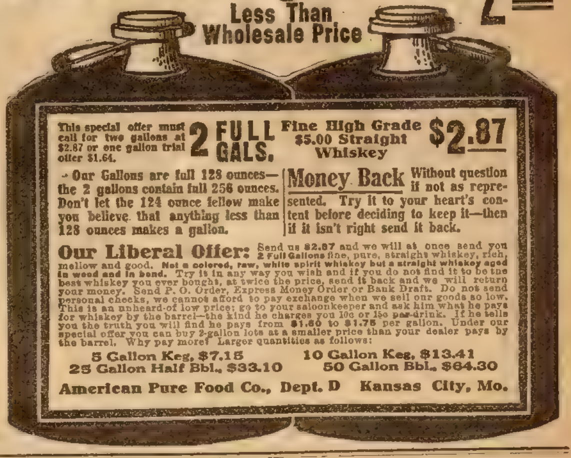

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Our Gallons are full 128 ounces—the 2 gallons contain full 256 ounces. Don't let the 124 ounce fellow make you believe that anything less than 128 ounces makes a gallon.

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5 Gallon Keg, $7.15
10 Gallon Keg, $13.41
25 Gallon Half Bbl., $33.10
50 Gallon Bbl., $64.30

American Pure Food Co., Dept. D Kansas City, Mo.

$2 to Those Who Buy The Blade and Ledger From Our Boy Agents

There are 30,000 boy agents of the Blade and Ledger. That means that each week 30,000 hustling boys of the country are learning the principles of salesmanship in a way that they can understand. Into this training we are giving our boy agents, goes years of experience in dealing with them, and it has reached a high state of perfection.

It broadens the boy's mind and develops him along the right lines and helps to make a man out of him; it teaches him energy, initiative and helps him to help himself; it gets him over the timidity that hampers so many growing boys. In others it supplants brazen boldness with politeness and tact. Every one of our readers has had opportunities to see the result of the training we give.

Thousands of the Blade's readers each week buy a paper from a boy agent. They were first lead to become purchasers of the Blade through the efforts of some boy agent. The way that boy approached you, how he got you interested, the arguments he used to make you buy and those he used to overcome your objections and his whole conduct makes mighty good ideas, and we want you to tell us about it. We want to hear from everybody, and we will send a check for $2.00 to each of the twenty-five persons who sends us the best letters telling us how the Blade and Ledger agent sold them a paper.

These letters will not be judged by their fine literary character, but **WHAT THEY TELL.** We want to know about the sale, we want to know of an instance where the boy used good salesmanship in selling you the Blade and Ledger. We will not use your name if you object, but be sure to write us right away. If possible, send pictures. You can't tell, perhaps your experience is just the experience that we want to use. Any way, send your letter care of the

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BOY'S
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CORNER

Hunting a Firebug;
Or, CHASING A LOST WILL

By J. M. MERRILL

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[illegible]an in No. 2, Jan. 13. Subscription can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER VII.
TRAILING THE FIREBUG.

ON ONE side of the damp-walled gully was a small cave, the front of which was shielded with vines. Into this cave the ugly boy tramp had [illegible] Billy at the point of a gun.

"Now sit down and [illegible] it."

[illegible] He realized that he was [illegible] of the tramp, who had late[illegible] the whole country with his [illegible]ets of incend[illegible] motive could [illegible] ing of young Gabb[illegible] could he quite make out the reason for Bunker's present move in making him a prisoner. Of course, on the lake the manifest motive was his, the tramp's, personal safety. But why did he hold him a prisoner now? Billy put his thoughts into a question which brought a laugh from the captor.

"I'm a sort of man-eater," grunted Bunker. "I've set fire to half the old shacks in the country, and it's fun to see them burn, don't you think so?"

"No," said Billy, "I don't."

"That's 'coz th[illegible] hired you to chase me down."

"Who said that?"

"It's true, ain't it?"

"No," declared Billy, "it isn't true."

He was anxious to placate his captor if possible, and a white lie never was very heavy on the boy's conscience.

"Well, what about the big reward offered for the firebug, eh?"

"Is there such a reward?"

"Why, you fat cur, you know there is," snapped the tramp.

It was fast growing dark in the cave. Voices were heard outside. Billy could distinguish that of his chum. He hoped yet feared for the result if the pursuing man and boy should find and enter the cave. The tramp could easily shoot one of them dead. It was a serious situation.

The tramp pressed the arm of his prisoner sharply.

"Sit still and wait," he whispered. "If you try to go outside or to give the alarm I'll put a hole through you!"

With that the fellow crawled away toward the mouth of the cave. At first Billy thought his captor meant to ambush and murder his friends. He crouched with bated breath, waiting for what was to follow. He expected to hear a gun crack, but was disappointed.

Soon the tramp crawled back to the side of his prisoner.

"What was it?" asked Billy, by way of [illegible] something.

"T[illegible] man and the tall chap who came with you."

"Where are they now?"

"Gone up the gully," chuckled the tramp. "Lucky for them, let me tell you, they didn't find the cave."

"Lucky for you, you mean," suggested Billy.

"No, for them. I meant to shoot both if they poked their noses in here," and the boy tramp laughed.

What a cold-blooded wretch he was.

"Are you Moses Bunker?" asked Billy, curious to learn the truth.

"Why, of course I am. You'd like to git your hands on that thousand dollars they've set upon my head, wouldn't you?" chuckled the other.

"How did you know [illegible]"

"About the reward? Ha! Ha! Ha! I know a lot of things. I know that you and Till Trodden set out on purpose to win that reward. I know, too, that instead of your getting it, you'll both be carried out of the woods on stretchers. I've got a dead cinch on things, and I'm [illegible] to use it. There's the girl."

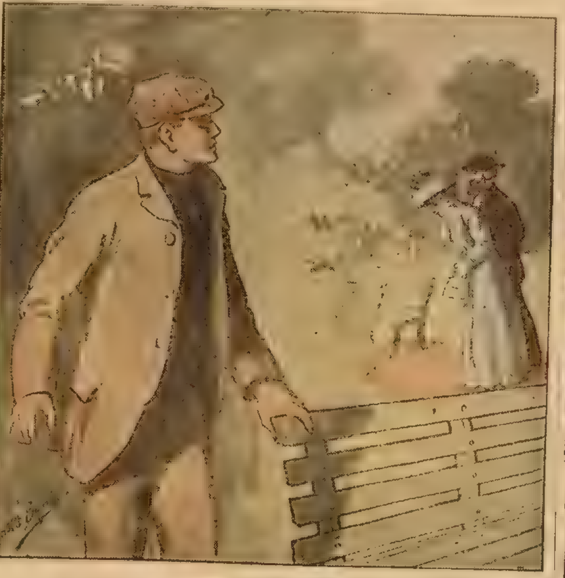
"[illegible]"

"[illegible] right." The tramp laughed a [illegible]tting laugh.

"Do you know her?" queried the worried Billy.

"Should say so. A peach ain't she. Now the old man's away, I mean to call on her. I'm going right now," and the speaker turned squarely about. Now seemed to Billy the time to make a move. He pounced upon the tramp's back.

Then began a terrific battle for the mastery. Billy got the worst of the tussle, however. He was thrown down, hit on the head, and completely stunned.



The startled face of Till Trodden.

When at length the fat boy opened his eyes all was as dark as a pocket.

"Hello!" called Billy.

He had striven to move, only to discover that his hands and feet were securely bound.

Nothing came of his call. The boy was very much alarmed. Where were his friends, Mr. Flight and Till? And there was the firebug tramp, free to roam the woods at will, capable of doing a vast deal of mischief. Billy thought of Neva, the settler's pretty daughter, remembering that the tramp had declared it as his intention to go to the house and tear her away to a fate worse than death. The fat boy rolled about, trying every conceivable way to break his bonds. Nothing availed him.

He [illegible] while the sweat poured from his face in streams. Again he set up a yell. The heartless firebug had forgotten to gag his prisoner, and this failure was destined to prove the wily fellow's downfall in the end.

Billy Gabbs had a lusty pair of lungs, which he used to good purpose. Till, having lost track of the settler, was retracing his steps down the marshy bottom of the gully, when his ear was saluted by a faint, half-smothered sound, as of some human in distress. This sound reached him just as that second shot had echoed through the hollow in which Hodag Lake glimmered beneath a smoky veil.

Till w[illegible]ed behind his tree for further developments. His half-burned torch lay sputtering not far distant. Unarmed as he was, Till felt that he was really no match for the desperate firebug.

He soon heard footsteps, and a few minutes later the form of the tramp passed within a yard of his tree, bearing across his arm the heavy army gun lately the property of Billy Gabbs. Till watched, seeing the tramp turn, climb up a few steps, and enter a screen of bushes. The tall boy saw nothing further. Was the rascal waiting for him to move that he might pit him with a bullet?

Standing stock still, Till heard the voice of the tramp calling the name of Billy Gabbs. "Hello Fatty!"

No answer was vouchsafed. Billy had heard, but lay quiet now, waiting in breathless suspense, expecting to be shot to death in his bonds. A low laugh followed, then the tramp withdrew into the gully once more. He stood up with his gun at a level and gazed sharply about in the gloom.

"Now where's the other one?" harshly growled the firebug. "Ha! I reckon I pinked him with one of them shots. Moses, you're in luck. Now for the girl and liberty!"

Till, crouching behind his tree, heard the loudly uttered words.

Presently the queer tramp noted a spark of smothered fire in the wet grass. He sprang upon this flourishing Till's dropped torch in the air.

"Hooray! Here's luck!" shouted the youth in seeming delight. "I'll set more fires, yes, more fires! It's fun to see 'em burn!" With that he whirled and ran up the gully with surprising speed.

Till watched until the torch disappeared over the brow of the bluff, after which he turned his attention to the sounds he had heard. He thought of his chum, hoping to find him somewhere in the vicinity. He penetrated the clump of bushes, discovering the mouth of the cave. Till stepped a pace within and called the name of Billy. Dead silence reigned.

"Hey, Billy, where are you?" again called Till.

"Hi! Oh, is that you, Till?" That was surely the voice of his chum. Listening a moment, and hearing nothing further the tall boy dropped on his hands and knees and crawled forward, nor did he stop till he heard the mutterings of his fat chum, who was chafing under his bonds.

"Hey, Billy, where are you?" called Till.

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"Right this way, Till, old boy, tied up like a sucking pig. Quick! Get out your jackknife and cut these blamed cords."

"You bet I will Billy."

Snip, snip, went the open blade of Till's knife beneath the bonds of his chum. Fatty rolled over with a grunt of delight, then drew himself to his knees.

"Where's the tramp?" asked the husky voice of Bill.

"Up in the woods somewhere," answered Till. "He shot at me twice, then ran away. He may come back, though. Let's get out of this."

The two boys were not long in doing this, crawling swiftly and silently to the mouth of the cave. Despite the gloom of sudden night, the boys were able to take their bearings. They soon found themselves on the higher, burned-over ground of the woods.

"Next thing is what?" asked Billy.

"The tramp," declared tall Till. "We must capture him."

"That's right," assented the fat boy, "for he's the fellow for whom old Trodden and others—Sheriff Spile for one—offered a big reward. He said he was going to carry off Miss Neva. What do you think of that?"

"I think we must prevent him from doing any such thing. He is a smart villain, all right, though. It's a wonder you're alive, Billy."

The fat boy had given a brief account of his adventures since parting from his friend, the latter listening intently.

"If we only had our guns," groaned Fatty.

"Yes. Fools that we were to let anybody steal them!

"And now we have to cope with this Moses Bunker [illegible]"

"That's what," agreed Till. "Whatever we do, let's be about it."

"I'm awful hungry," groaned Billy.

"And I lost our grub——"

"You did?" Confound the luck!"

"Our only salvation is to get back to Neva and a good supper."

"Here we go, then."

The two boys hastened their steps through the woods in the direction they supposed the Flight home to be. In the course of half an hour, Till, who was in advance, came to a sudden halt, uttering a cry of dismay.

CHAPTER VIII.

AT HAWKE'S INN.

"Fire!" almost screamed fat Billy.

And the boy uttered the truth. A fine log dwelling was about to collapse from fire. The roof fell in as the boys gazed. Red tongues of flame darted from between the ribs of the house. The heavens were lit for a wide expanse by the burning house.

The two boys stood in the edge of the woods spellbound at the sight. It was now too late to save either house or contents. Nobody seemed to be about the place. Coming as they did suddenly upon the scene, the boys were more or less bewildered.

"Bad affair," said Till.

"Another bit of the firebug's work."

"I wonder where the owners are. Don't see anybody about," said Fatty.

Till's quick brain caught a picture of dead forms lying within the burning house. Had the villain tramp murdered the inmates and fired the building to cover his crime? The tall boy reasoned it out in that way, and so remarked to his chum.

"By gracious!" exclaimed Billy, "if that's the case, we ain't safe here for a minute," and he dodged back to the cover of the woods.

Till stood his ground, however, slowly advancing. The fat boy watched from cover the movements of his chum, trying to decide what was his duty under the circumstances. When he saw Till approach within a few rods of the burning building without being molested, Billy took courage and followed after.

The two boys walked around the fire, watched and waited till the sides caved in, sending a cloud of sparks up into the sky. From the house Till followed a path down to a well in the side of a cut or run, when for the first time he made a discovery.

"Say, Billy, d'ye know what place this is?" queried Till, as his chum thrust his head into view from above.

"Blamed if I do, pard!"

"I didn't recognize it at first, but we were here only a few hours ago."

"What! D'ye mean——"

"I mean that it's the Flight home that's gone up in smoke."

"By cracky! I guess you are right, Tilly boy."

Till came back from the well and stood beside his chum on the level ground. The settler's house lay now a heap of smoking ruins. For some time the two lads discussed the situation, hardly knowing what was best for them to do.

"I can see only one way out of our troubles," finally spoke the elder boy.

"I reckon there might be two," and Billy grinned, a sad, unwholesome grin.

"Only one," decided the elder boy. "We must go right straight back to Gildwater——"

"Back to Gildwater!" fairly screamed Billy. "Well, I guess nit!"

"And I say yes."

"But, Till, we haven't done a thing. We can't go back without capturing the firebug—that's what we came for."

"We came for that and have failed."

"Shoot! No, we haven't," persisted Billy, swelling with sudden importance. "I for one shan't go back without the scalp of Moses Bunker dangling at my belt. There's going to be something doing before long, believe me, pard."

"There has been something doing, Billy," returned Till with a bitter laugh. "The time to capture this missing Moses was when you had him with you in the boat and in the cave. Now he is gone, and we are not likely to get sight of him very soon. My plan is to go back, get a new outfit, and start all over."

At this the fat boy demurred.

"No use talkin', we catch Moses this trip or not at all."

"But I tell you, Billy——"

"Tell me nothing, old man, but listen to me."

"Go on, Billy."

"Who set that fire d'ye think," pointing at the ruins of the Flight home.

"Why, the firebug, Moses Bunker, of course," agreed Till.

"Well, that being true, it stands to reason that he ain't far off at this very minute. We'll hide in the thicket till he shows himself. I'll make a noise to draw him into the place when you take him from behind and knock him stiff. See?"

The fat boy had worked himself into a fit of excitement over considering the easy victory they were to win over their man. Till, however, could not be led to entertain his chum's plan.

"It might be feasible," he admitted, "but even then the blow you want me to strike might kill the tramp."

"What if it did? Wouldn't he get what he deserved?" snorted Billy.

"He might, but I don't intend to kill anybody, be sure of that," avowed Till.

"Softy!" sneered the fat boy.

"Suppose I hide in the thicket and you do the knocking down?" suggested the tall boy.

At this, however, Bill demurred, so the chums were unable to come to an agreement. Billy soon began to groan with hunger. After waiting till the house was but a heap of smoking ashes, the boys prodded with sticks about the place, half expecting to find the remains of the inmates. No bones or skeletons were found, however, much to the relief of Till.

"The tramp has done as he said he would," spoke Billy, after their search of the ruins was finished. "He has carried Miss Flight away with him. Now, do you think I am the man to desert a damsel in distress? Not on your life!"

Billy smote his palms together, rolled his eyes upward, striking a dramatic attitude. Till was too preoccupied to laugh at the antics of his companion.

"We must not give up, of course," said he. "It can't be far to Hawke's Inn. We will go there, get something to eat, interest old Jim Hawke in this affair, and take up the trail once more."

This seemed about the only thing to do, under the circumstances, so the two boys set out to find the back country tavern run by the eccentric Jim Hawke. Till went ahead. After scouring the burned district, for some distance the two searchers found themselves in a well-defined road, which the tall boy was ready to declare was the highway leading past the inn.

"We're all right now," congratulated Till.

"I only hope we are," half assented the fat boy. "My stomach is fast caving in; can't stand the racket much longer."

Fortunately for our boy friends they took the right course, which led them after a half-hour's walk to the wayside tavern of Jim Hawke. The hour was verging on midnight, yet lights gleamed from the long, low structure. The doors were swung wide, music and laughter swirling in merry gusts through windows and doors.

"Hooray!" yelled Billy, clapping his hands. "Old Jim's having a dance!"

"It looks like it, Billy."

"We'll go in and dance with some of the pretty halfbreeds."

"Not for me," frowned Till. "There's something of more importance on tap." He thought of pretty, dark-eyed Neva, feeling very much worried on her account. Halfbreed girls did not interest him just now.

The boys entered the tavern, and were cordially greeted by some of their acquaintances, although the majority of those present were strangers to them.

"Has Abe Flight been here tonight?" asked Till of the landlord, a portly, beer-drinking, rubicund-visaged man of fifty.

"No," said Hawke, "he hasn't."

"Nor his girl Neva?"

"Nary one, bub."

Till's face showed his disappointment. The landlord questioned him, soon learning all about the adventures of the two boys.

"That firebug ought to be hung!" declared Hawke. "There'll be a lynching bee some fine day when the river lads get hands on the cuss."

"Perhaps, if they ever do," agreed Till.

"Oh, they will, you may bet on that," chuckled jolly Jim Hawke, who was known far and wide as a good-natured, rather reckless sort, with the best of intentions, yet wholly without a moral governor about his makeup.

"Now, you boys go right ahead and enjoy the dance," urged the landlord. "There's gals here from Bigelows, from Red Cross and Dundee—oh there's a chance for you to have a good time, all right. Tomorrow will be time enough to think about hunting for Mose, the terrible."

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The Doctor's Advice

by Dr. Lewis Baker

The questions answered below are general in character; the symptoms or diseases are given and the answers will apply to any case of similar nature.

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Hopeful Man:—Yes, I can offer any man whose vitality is lowered, hope; but faithful, progressive treatment is often necessary. Your condition is not beyond hope. Careful living will greatly aid in restoring the vital powers which have weakened from a dissipation of your vital forces in both work and pleasures. Timidity, insomnia, nervousness and inability to act rationally and naturally as a healthy, vigorous person would can soon be overcome, and a bounding new health can be felt surging through the entire system if the following treatment is faithfully adhered to. Use the following powerful, though harmless nerve tonic in teaspoonful doses 3 to 4 times a day: compound fluid balmwort 1 oz., Compound essence cardiol 1 oz., Tincture cadomene compound 1 oz. (not cardamom) and compound sarsaparilla 3 ozs. Mix all together, and shake well. Then to enrich the blood and increase your weight, which is far below normal get a package of 3 grain hypo-nuclane tablets. Take one tablet after meals and you will soon be rejuvenated into perfect health.

M. C. K:—Smothering sensations, heart palpitations, fast breathing with slight exertion, nervousness, paleness, weakness, stomach distress, wind and gas, belching and bloating indicate chronic dyspepsia accompanied by anemia (abnormal thinness) due to various causes, and curable by a progressive treatment. For the dyspepsia and indigestion obtain tablets triopeptine and take as per directions accompanying.

Harrison:—Your request for a simple but efficient cough and lung remedy has already been answered in these columns, but I will repeat this formula which is superior to any thing I know of to cure chronic bronchitis, hoarseness, whooping cough, sore throat, etc. Obtain from any well stocked druggist a 2½ oz. package of essence Mentho-Laxene, and mix it with a home made syrup according to directions accompanying it; this makes a full pint of the finest laxative, curative and tonic cough syrup, superior to patent or labeled goods and about 8 times cheaper. It makes the most effective cough remedy that I have ever prescribed.

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"But we are hungry. Where is Billy?"

"Gone down to see the cook in the kitchen," laughed the bartender.

"Might a-known it," chuckled big Jim. "That Gabbs boy's the limit where victuals are concerned. But you, Till, come with me, I'll show you to a good layout. Supper for the crowd will soon be called——"

"I would rather eat in private, Jim."

"You shall. Come, me boy."

Till was led to a nook off the dining-room, where at a small table he had the pleasure of supping with the landlord. The layout was regal enough, and Trodden soon had his fill. When they again withdrew to the barroom, Billy was there joshing the bartender. The fat boy's face was shining, his eyes dancing with a satisfied light. The cook had filled him up with good cheer, and Billy was once more ready for business.

Till quitted the room, walking down along the side of the building, intent on watching the dancers without himself being seen. Windows and doors were open so that everyone within the dancing hall came under his gaze.

After a short espionage of the dancers Till turned to retrace his steps. He felt something crumble beneath him—his feet were sinking into the ground! With a mighty spring the boy landed on the crumbling edge of a suddenly revealed pit—an old well which had been covered with plank, which, rotting, had given way beneath his tread.

A wild grasp after safety, missing it by a hair's breadth, then down, down whirled the boy into darkness, a mass of rotting plank falling after! No sound came up from below, nothing but a noisome smell, indicating the filthy nature of the tomb into which Till Trodden had plunged.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SECRET OF THE WELL.

Through the darkness of night a human figure darted to the spot where Till Trodden disappeared into mother earth.

"It was that boy—that boy of all others!" ejaculated the man.

For some minutes he stood on the brink of the old well in a debating attitude. There was something on his mind that seemed to trouble him. He now and then cast a glance at the swift-flying forms on the dance floor, heard the gay bursts of laughter, noted the gaudy costumes of the border maidens, and laughed a harsh, grating laugh.

"The boy may be dead," he muttered. "Might better let it rest so, and go to Olivia with the news; she might be willing to ante up. Who knows?"

There was a sore temptation in the soul of Abraham Flight this night. He had made his way to the forest tavern for a purpose. First he had trailed the firebug into a slashing which had not yet been touched by fire. Losing him here, he turned his steps toward the tavern, arriving shortly after our boy heroes. He had not made his presence known, however, resolving to watch and wait around a bit, noting what was going on. And, shadowing the tall boy, he had seen him drop from sight into the bowels of the earth. Flight knew the old tavern well, but had forgotten the long covered well until it was now brought to his notice.

Dropping to his knees the man of the woods bent over and called the name of Till. No answer was vouchsafed. Again the man called, still receiving no reply.

"Poor fellow! He is quite dead!"

With that he turned his steps toward the tavern entrance. A man came out and stood on the steps. It proved to be the landlord, who greeted the settler cordially.

"Whom have you for guests tonight, Jim?"

"A lot of sandpipers mostly—none of the upper ten," and the man questioned laughed.

"This isn't a resort for that sort. Have you seen a trampish-looking youth hereabouts since dark?"

"No, I haven't."

"No suspicious characters at all, eh?"

"Why, no. There's a lot of river chaps, some halfbreeds and the like, but nobody that'd figure as the firebug—he's the chap you mean, I s'pose?"

"Yes—Moses Bunker."

"You won't find him in these parts, Abe. He's wise enough to fight shy of the settlements, be sure of that."

"He was at my place today."

"Is that so? Why didn't you nab the cuss?"

"He was too sharp for me, all right," and the settler laughed grimly.

"That fellow Moses is a bad one, and no mistake," declared the landlord. "Mr. Trodden seems very anxious to get him."

"When did you see Trodden?" asked Flight, evincing sudden interest.

"This morning. He was driving like split, stopped only long enough to pass the time of day and mention that he was anxious to get a hand on Mose Bunker. You see, the city plug owns a lot of pine that has been destroyed by these fires. Unless the firebug is captured soon, old Trodden is likely to be ruined."

"Not much danger of that," laughed the settler.

"The old millionaire's son is here with Fatty Gabbs; they came in less than an hour ago. Been hunting the incendiary, I understand. Boys can't do much in that line, though."

"Boys are keener than men sometimes," avowed Flight. "Till Trodden is a very bright lad. As for that chum of his—well, the less said the better."

Billy came lounging forward at this very moment, and asked hurriedly: "Have either of you men seen Till?"

And then Flight remembered what he had seen outside.

"I'm afraid something has happened to the boy," at once spoke Flight. He told how the tall boy had plunged into the old well. Billy was wide awake at once and rushed away to the rescue.

"The old well!" exclaimed the landlord. "What do you know about that?"

"Very little," returned Flight. "I simply knew there was such a hole, but it has never been open in my day. I am sorry if the boy has been killed. It's his foolish recklessness."

"I never knew of a well of that sort. Where is it, Abe?"

"Right out by the west wing. Come, we will investigate."

The two men hurried to the opening into which Billy was peering with wild-eyed excitement.

"I've called to him forty times, but he don't speak," wailed the lad. "Oh, dear, I hope Till ain't killed!"

"How deep is it?" from Jim Hawke.

"Forty feet, I am told," answered Flight.

"Get a ladder some one," called Billy.

"I'll send a man for one," blurted Hawke.

"See here, Jim," and Abe Flight grasped the landlord by the arm. "I want to caution you not to make a public thing of this accident. It'll break up your dance if you do"

"It might——"

"Go get the ladder yourself and say nothing. Let the folks remain in ignorance of this accident. It can do no good to create needless excitement."

"I reckon you are right, Abe," and the portly landlord ambled quietly away to seek a ladder. This he soon procured, returning at the end of a few minutes, puffing with the exertion. The ladder, a long one, was soon thrust into the open well. It was barely long enough to reach the bottom.

"Careful," warned Billy. "Don't put the end on my chum. He may be alive."

The fat boy swung himself over the brink, and was soon going down, hand over hand, into the darkness below. He was gone a seemingly long time. Presently the head of the boy was thrust above the surface once more. He was puffing and gasping.

"No go!" aspirated he. "Till ain't in the well."

Soon Billy Gabbs stood on solid ground, rubbing his stomach, blinking like an owl in a strong sunlight.

"No, he ain't there," shaking his head when questioned. "You made a mistake, Mr. Flight."

"I am sure I did not," emphasized the settler. "I saw the boy, saw his face in the lamplight, and know it was he. He dropped like a shot into this hole. I saw that, too. You must be too excited to tell what you are doing, Billy boy."

"Go look yourself, then."

"That I will do."

The next instant Flight was descending the ladder. He went with deliberation. When he felt his feet on a bunch of broken plank and debris, he knew the bottom was reached. As the fat lad had said, no boy was there. Flight felt about in the darkness, soon satisfying himself that a great heap of rotten wood and turf literally filled the space in the bottom of the well. He felt that he understood why no boy was found—he lay buried beneath the mass that had fallen from above.

Thrusting his hand down he felt a mass of human hair. He was now satisfied that the boy was dead. The thought gave the man a shock, and yet a feeling of relief came over him at the same time. There were some incidents in the life of Abraham Flight upon which it was not pleasant for him to dwell. By nature he was not an evil man. Circumstances over which he had no control, however, had made him do things for which he was afterward sorry. Slowly he came back up the ladder.

"I did not find the boy," he said, upon being questioned. "I see now that I was mistaken. You had best fill up the hole, Jim, that no more danger may be present."

"If nobody's at the bottom I'll do so," responded the landlord.

Billy Gabbs was not satisfied, however. He resolved to make further investigation. In a sense it was a relief to him to find no one at the bottom of the old well. He made a second visit, this time being more careful in his search. When he came to the top, he reported, as did Flight, that no boy, living or dead, occupied the bottom of the well. The fat boy smiled behind the backs of the two men as he walked thoughtfully toward the tavern once more.

Jim Hawke sent a man to cover the well with plank, at the same time declaring that he would the next day fill up the place. Flight walked about uneasily after that.

"Better go to bed," suggested the landlord.

"No bed for me tonight," said the settler. He was very much agitated. The landlord tried to cheer him with a glass of liquor, but this the man refused. He was thinking of the stolen papers and of missing Moses.

"I am going home," he finally decided. "I left Neva all alone. While that villainous firebug is roaming the woods, no girl is safe. I ought not to have remained away as long as I have."

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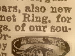

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He picked up his rifle and started through the door. A plucking at his sleeve held his steps. He turned to look into the eyes of Billy Gabbs.

"Sir, your house is burnt up," said the boy.

"Burned up!" ejaculated Flight. "No nonsense, now!"

"Not a bit of it! It's the truth I'm telling ye."

"Did you go there since I saw you?"

"Yes, Till and I did."

Billy then explained. The settler set his gun down with a sharp thud, and turned a white face toward the landlord who stood near.

"My soul!" he groaned, "if this boy speaks the truth I am wholly undone! I'd sooner die than live after this. Neva was my all, the only being of my blood and bone, and I loved her as my life!"

"Sure you did," smilingly returned Jim. "There's no call for you to get dippy. Very likely you'll find the girl at one of the neighbors, un armed."

"No, no, I know better!" groaned Flight. "It is the work of the firebug—he has enticed Neva away and murdered her!"

CHAPTER X.

OVERHEARD IN THE PARK.

A man stood under a tree in the park of a considerable city. He had been pacing back and forth for half an hour, at times muttering sullenly, evidently very much put out about something.

"If she fails me now I shall make trouble," muttered the man, showing his teeth. "I have passed through trouble enough for one time. If the boy had lived it might have been different."

Just then a dark-skirted form came down one of the graveled walks and halted before the solitary man.

"Abraham!"

"It's me, all right, Mrs. Trodden," grunted the man.

"Are we quite safe here?" she asked, approaching to his side.

"Yes, safe as can be. Most people are attending the open-air meetings at the other end of town, a fine time for our purpose. Sit down."

The woman hesitated.

"Did you hear me, Olivia, sit down?" He pointed to the bench near by.

"I—I—I am fearful——"

"Tush! there's nothing to be afraid of. Tory Trodden has gone up the river, still in search of the firebug, Moses Bunker. Does he not suspect the truth?"

"I hardly think so. He is very bitter against Moses."

The woman sat down, the man soon following suite. Very few people were stirring in the park. The hour was late and the lights dim at this spot.

"What have you to report, Olivia?" suddenly asked the man.

"Nothing much. The boy has been gone from home for several days now. He took his rifle and said he was going to the woods——"

"Yes, yes, I know. He has been hunting the firebug."

"How silly——"

"Not so silly. He found him."

"He did? Till Trodden found the villain who has worked so much mischief on our pine lands. Wonderful! When will the boy return home?"

"He will never return."

"Till never return? Why, what do you mean, Abraham?"

"Just exactly that. The boy known as Till Trodden will never darken your doors again."

"Are you sure?"

"I am willing to swear it."

"Have you dared——"

"One moment, Olivia," catching her arm and transfixing her with a penetrating gaze. "What you imagine has not occurred. I am not villain enough to do as you would like me to do. Ah no—I am not a murderer."

"Why, Abraham!"

"Nonsense now, Olivia Horne. I know your evil nature, your mean spirit that would do anything for money. Don't think I have have been in your society for years without reading your hollow, grasping nature to the quick. That will——"

"Mercy, Abraham, you are insulting!"

And yet the speaker stirred uneasily on the rough park seat. She was far from being at ease, although she forced a dismal little laugh.

"You are trying to frighten me, Abraham."

"Not so," he said quickly. "You asked after that handsome stepson of yours, and seemed much gratified when I told you he would never return home."

"I shall miss him——"

"Truly you will, since he is dead."

"Dead! Till dead!"

"That's what I said."

The woman shuddered and drew her cloak more closely about her shoulders. She did not speak for fully a minute, when she laid a trembling hand on her companion's arm and asked: "How did it happen, Abraham?"

"It was wholly an accident, Olivia."

"I am so thankful for that."

"Much better that way, isn't it?" with a harsh laugh.

"Yes, very much better," she agreed.

"Nothing can now come up to give you fear for all those broad acres left by Granther Bunker—they are all yours now, Mrs. Trodden. At least you think they are."

"Yes, I think they are," sighed the other. "Tell me about it, Abraham."

"Not very much to tell. The boy was up at Hawke's Inn, where he fell into an old well and was killed."

"When did it happen?"

"Three days ago."

"Why was nothing done about it? Why wasn't the body sent home?"

"Queer isn't it?" and the man laughed. "Well, I'll tell you how it was. Till's body was so deeply buried by rotten timbers and dirt as to be completely covered from sight. I was the only person who knew that the boy was in the well. It was a dangerous place, and the landlord of the inn had it filled up on the day following the accident. The body of Till lies buried in the woods

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(Continued back to page twenty-one.)

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⁂

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"Nope. I have already put all my money into a fruit orchard."

"Where?"

"On my wife's hat."

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J. P.

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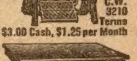

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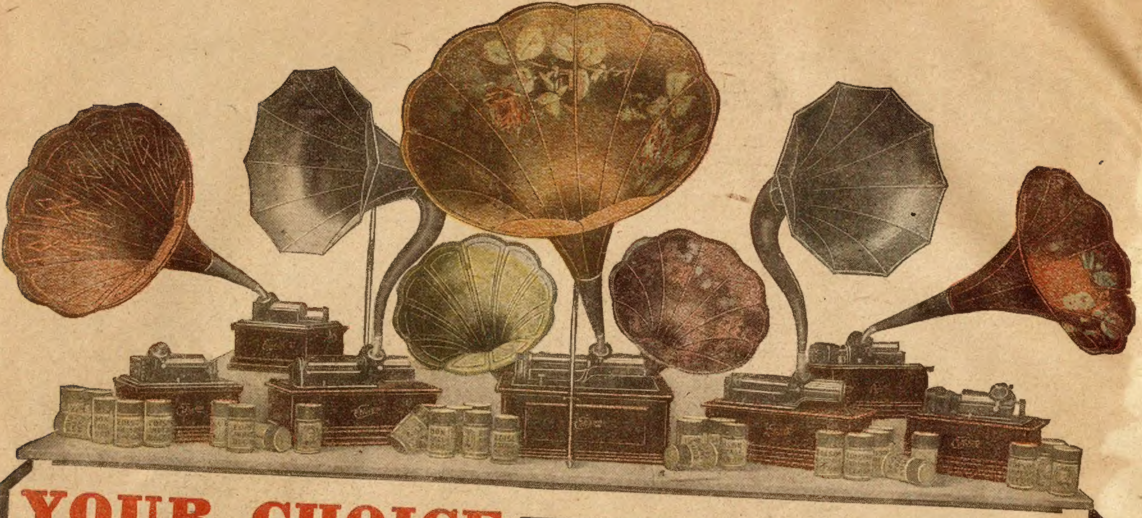

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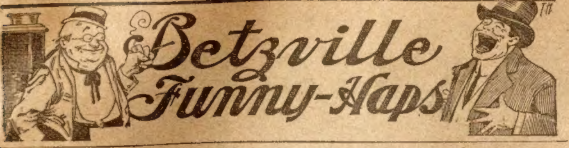
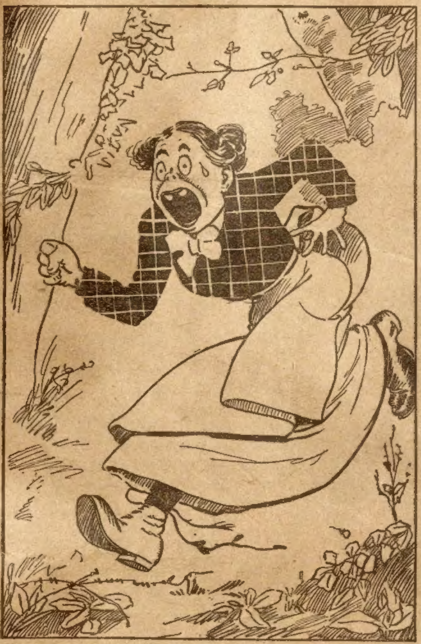


Scroggs' Identical Twins

By Ellis Parker Butler

(Copyright by W. G. Chapman.)

Mr. Pethcod Scroggs, of our village, has almost more trouble than any other man in Betzville, his twins are so identically alike. It makes it all the worse that both twins are identically the same age, for it would be easier to tell them apart if one was a few years older than the other. Pethcod says he does not often complain about the ways of nature, but that if he had had the inventing of twins, he would have left an interval of, say, four or eight years between them, or, if they had to be of the same age, he would have sort of distributed them into two different families. He says he considers two twins at once in the same family as almost a personal insult.


She went leaping through the big woods, yelling as loud as she could.

Last Wednesday one of Pethcod's four-year-old twins wandered away from the house and got lost in the big woods back of Uncle Jed Freeman's farm, and it worried Pethcod and Mrs. Scroggs nearly crazy. It was about five o'clock when he had a feeling that maybe one of the twins was lost, but he didn't know whether it was John or Joe. He went out into the yard, and there was one of the twins, scooting around as lively as could be, and then Pethcod ran around to the other side of the house, and there was the other twin—or at least it seemed so—but he couldn't be sure, the twins are so lively. Pethcod says he ran around the house for over an hour, and sometimes he thought it was both twins and sometimes he thought it was only one, moving from place to place, but at last he got so puzzled that he took the twin and tied it to the pump, and then when he went around the house he saw that there was no other twin there, and he knew the other twin must have wandered into the big woods and got lost.

It was getting on toward dark by then, and Pethcod knew that the only thing to do was to get up a search party and search the woods, and he would have done it immediately, but he couldn't decide which twin it was that was lost. He stood and looked at the twin that he had tied to the pump, and sometimes he thought it was John, and sometimes he thought it was Joe, but he couldn't be positive, and until he could be sure he wasn't going to start a search party, for it would be plumb foolish to start out a search party to find a twin that wasn't lost.

About the time he was getting perfectly discouraged Mrs. Scroggs came out and he told her what was the matter, and she stood a while and looked at the captive twin, and then she spoke right up.

"That's John!" she said positively.

"All right then," said Pethcod, and he went right down to the postoffice and gave the alarm that Joe was lost in the big woods, and Uncle Ashdod Clute immediately got on a box and organized a public meeting to consider the best thing to do. The first thing he did was to nominate himself chairman of the meeting, and he appointed Pethcod secretary, and named a vice-chairman and a second vice-chairman. So that got things started all right, and Pethcod wrote a letter to himself, stating that Joe was lost, and then he read the letter to the meeting, and it was the unanimous opinion that the matter was important, and that a petition ought to be drawn up, petitioning the chairman to appoint a searching committee to search the woods and find Joe as quickly as possible, but it was too late by that time to get the petition ready, so the meeting adjourned, to meet the next night, and Pethcod was instructed to have the petition all ready.

He went home feeling a lot better in his mind, since he had got matters moving along in the right direction, and the only thing that troubled him much was John, who interfered with the regular household affairs the next day. Pethcod had tied him to the pump in such a way that the handle of the pump was tied in with him, so the family could not pump any water, and Pethcod was so busy drawing up the petition that he had no time to untie John. Our duty to a lost child should always be foremost.

When the meeting met the next night the petition was accepted and a resolution to get up a search committee to find Joe in the big woods went through with a rush, and in less than three hours the search committee had got its torches and lanterns and was on its way into the big woods to find Joe.

Just about then Mrs. Pethcod Scroggs became so thirsty her tongue hung out, and she simply had to have a drink of water, so she went out to the pump, but the minute she saw John she gave a scream, for it was not John at all, but Joe. She knew by the way he snored that she must have been mistaken when she thought he was John, and she was so chagrined and startled that she forgot all about being thirsty and started at full whoop after the search committee. She went leaping through the big woods yelling as loud as she could, and just as she came up with the search committee the committee had found Joe, and were singing a song of triumph that Dave Giffings' boy had thoughtfully written for the occasion to the tune of John Brown's body. It went like this:

Joe, Joe Pethcod, he is found and he is found,
Joe, Joe Pethcod, he is found and he is found,
He is found and he is found.

They had just finished the first verse when Mrs. Scroggs ran up screaming:

"Stop! Stop! Stop finding Joe!" she cried. "It is John that is lost!"

But she was already too late, for they had found Joe. So there was nothing to do but to call a meeting of the committee, and the committee decided, quite properly, that as they had started out to find one twin and hadn't found him, the whole list of parliamentary rules were broken by finding the other, and that there was nothing to do but go home and start over again the next day. So they told John to stay where he was and they would come out and find him the next day, properly and in his right name. Then they passed a resolution of censure against Mrs. Scroggs for giving wrong information and went home, and they would have found John properly the next day, only the little skeesicks tagged along behind them all the way home.

In next week's Ledger the reader will find another laughable Funny-Hap. It is all about the mixup of Aunt Rhinocolura and the Coachman. Don't let it get past you.

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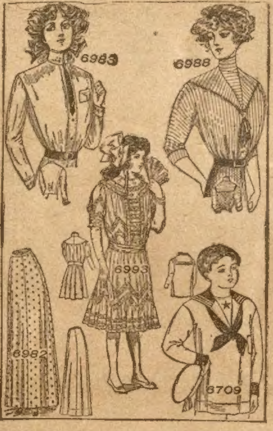

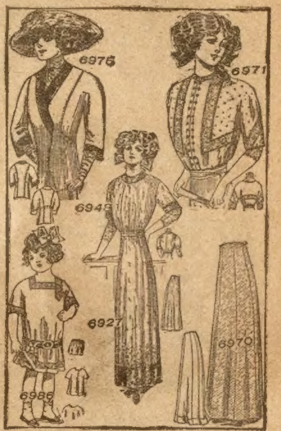

6983—Blouse or Shirt Waist for Misses and Small Women, 14, 16, 18 years. The quantity of material required for the 16-year size is 3¼ yards 27 inches wide, 2 yards 36 or 1⅞ yards 44 inches wide.

6988—French Blouse with Sailor Collar, 34 to 40 bust. The quantity of material required for the medium size is 3½ yards 27, 3 yards 36 or 2½ yards 44 inches wide.

6982—Six-Gored Skirt, 22 to 32 waist. The quantity of material required for the medium size is 5½ yards 27 inches wide, 2½ yards 36 or 2¾ yards 44 inches wide.

6993—Girl's Dress with Straight Gathered Skirt, 10, 12 and 14 years. For a girl of 12 years of age will be required 6½ yards of material 27 inches wide, 4½ yards 36 or 3¾ yards 44 with ⅝ yard of all-over embroidery 18 inches wide, 20 yards of insertion and 5½ yards of edging to trim as illustrated.

6709—Boy's Middy Blouse, 6 to 12 years. For a boy 10 years of age will be required 2¾ yards of material 27 inches wide, 2½ yards 36, 1⅝ yards 44, 1 yard 27 for collar, cuffs and tie.

6975—Empire Coat with Body and Sleeves in One, 34 to 40 bust. The quantity of material required for the medium size is 3¼ yards 27 inches wide, 2¼ yards 36 or 2⅛ yards 44 inches wide, with 1⅝ yards 27 inches wide for trimming.

6971—Peasant Waist with Bolero Effect for Misses and Small Women, 14, 16 and 18 years. For the 16-year size the blouse will require ⅞ yard of material 27, 36 or 44 inches wide for the plain portions, 1¼ yards 27, ⅞ yard 36 or 44 for the bolero portion, with 3¾ yards of banding to make as illustrated; or 1⅜ yards 27 or 36 or 1¼ yards 44 inches wide if one material is used throughout. For the under sleeves will be required ½ yard, for yoke and undersleeves ⅞ yard 18 inches wide.

6986—Child's One-Piece Dress with Bloomers, 2 to 6 years. The quantity of material required for the 4-year size is 3⅝ yards 27 inches wide, 2¾ yards 36 or 44 inches wide, with 3⅛ yards of banding.

6948—Tucked Peasant Waist for Misses and Small Women, 14, 16 and 18 years. 6927—Straight Gathered Skirt, 14, 16 and 18 years. For the 16-year size the waist will require 2¼ yards of material 27 inches wide, 1½ yards 36 or 1⅛ yards 44, with 1⅛ yards 36 inches wide for the lining, ⅜ yard of allover lace for the yoke and under sleeves; for the skirt will be needed 3⅜ yards 27 or 36, or 2¼ yards 44 inches wide. To make the frock as illustrated from bordered marquisette 44 inches in width will be needed 3½ yards.

6970—Nine-Gored Skirt, 22 to 36 waist. The quantity of material required for the medium size is 7 yards 27, 5 yards 36 or 4¼ yards 44 inches wide when material has figure or nap; 5½ yards 27, 4 yards 36 or 3 yards 44 inches wide when material has neither figure nor nap. The width of the walking skirt at the lower edge is 2¾ yards.

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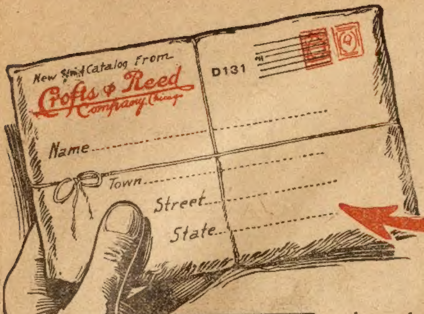

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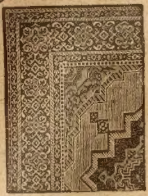

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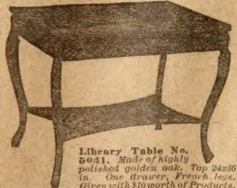

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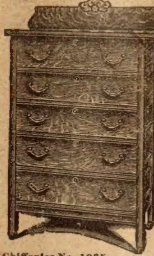
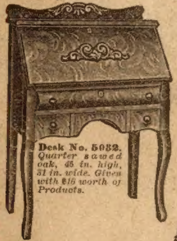


Chiffonier No. 1085. *Golden oak, five drawers. Size of top 18x33 in.; height 52 in. Given with $10 worth of our Products.*



Desk No. 5082. *Quarter sawed oak, 45 in. high, 31 in. wide. Given with $16 worth of Products.*

Just to Illustrate

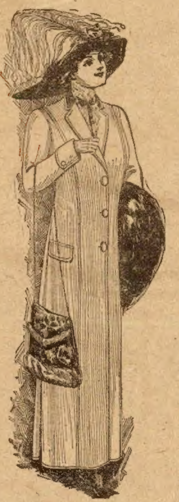
We Quote a Few Prices When Premium Is Not Taken

Laundry Soap, our price 2½c a bar
Toilet Soap (3 cakes in a box), 12½c
Baking Powder, 12½c a can
Tea, 1 lb., 30c. Starch, box 5c
Pork and Beans, 7½c a can
Family Breakfast Oats, 1⅓ lb. pkg. 12½c
Corn Flakes, 7½c. Rice, 2 lbs., 12½c
Lemon Extract, 2 oz., 10c., etc., etc.

This saving is obtainable on our entire list of over 450 different products. There is scarcely a single article which you use in your home that is not in our list of Guaranteed Food Products and on which you cannot save big money. We can only quote a few here as samples, but our catalog gives all.

30 Days' Trial—No Money Asked in Advance

We guarantee our goods as no storekeeper can. We make most of them, know their excellent quality—and gladly ship them on 30 days' trial. If not satisfactory, we ask no pay and remove what is left at our expense. We ship them, giving you 30 days to pay. That gives you a whole month to test their quality.



Ladies' Coat No. 56085
A Beautiful Black Thibet Coat with Silk Velvet Collar, four large handsome buttons; a splendid value. Size 32 to 44 bust. Given with $10 worth of products. Catalog also shows fine line of Suits, Waists, Undergarments, Plumes, Shoes, etc.

We Have Nearly A Million Customers

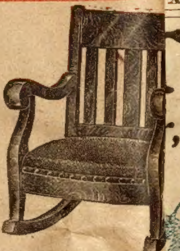
We have thousands of customers among readers of Boyce's Weekly buying from us regularly and nearly a million patrons all over the United States.

How to Get Furniture, Clothing, Carpets, Bedding and 1,500 Nice Things for the Home With Your Orders

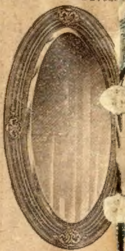
for our Grocery and Food Products. We haven't space to explain this attractive feature of our Factory-to-Home plan, but our big catalog tells you how you can get anything in the way of Furniture, Dishes, Carpets, Rugs, Silverware, Lace Curtains, Clothing, Shoes, in fact anything for the home without paying a cent extra.

Send for Your Copy of Our Big New Spring Catalog

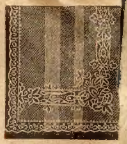
It shows over 1,500 beautiful and useful articles similar to those shown here. Certainly it is worth a two-cent stamp or a penny post card to learn of this great money-saving plan. Send for this valuable book now and be convinced.



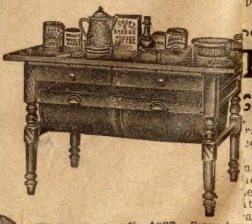
Oak Rocker No. 10048. *Quarter sa Oak, seat genuine black leather. beautiful. Excellent value. Given with $10 worth of Guaranteed Produ*



Mirror No. 2804. *Ha 4 in. oval frame with gilt ornaments. Mirr French bevel plate gi 18x40 in. Given with $1 worth of products.*

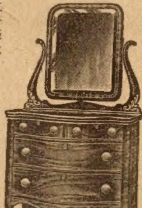


Curtain No. 81011. *Be ful reproduction of ant-made lace design wide, 3½ yds. long. 2 p given with $10 worth Products.*

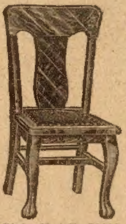


Kitchen Cabinet No. 4027. *Frame, legs, drawers hard wood. Top smooth white bass 28x48. Has two sliding boards 17x22, two 20x15x11. Excellent article, given with $10 w of Products.*

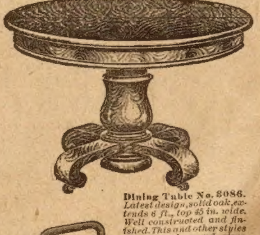
CROFTS & REED CO. Dept. D 131 CHICAGO



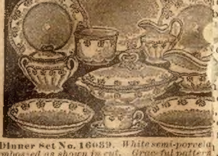
Dresser No. 10158. *Mahogany Quartered Oak, or Bird's Eye Maple. Beautiful design, deep drawers. Top 20x38. Chiffonier and Dressing Table to match. Given with orders for our Products.*



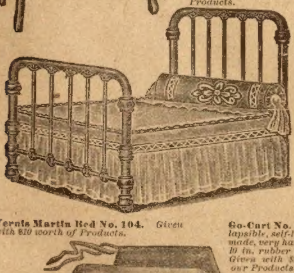
Dining Chair No. 80114. *Solid Oak, box seat genuine leather. Given with $4 order of Products.*



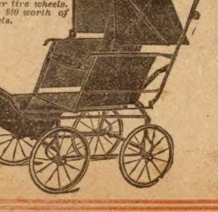
Dining Table No. 8086. *Latest design, solid oak, extends 6 ft., top 45 in. wide. Well constructed and finished. This and other styles square and round given with orders for our Products.*



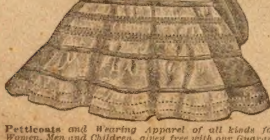
Dinner Set No. 16039. *White semi-porcela embossed as shown in cut. Graceful pattern weight, 100 pieces, given with $10 worth of pro*



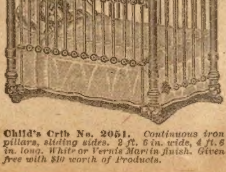
Vernis Martin Bed No. 104. *Given with $10 worth of Products.*



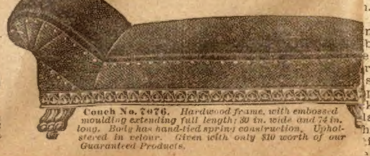
Go-Cart No. 2012. *Collapsible, self-locking, well made, very handsome, has 10 in. rubber tire wheels. Given with $10 worth of our Products.*



Petticoats *and Wearing Apparel of all kinds for Women, Men and Children, given free with our Guaranteed Products.*



Child's Crib No. 2051. *Continuous iron pillars, sliding sides. 2 ft. 6 in. wide, 4 ft. 6 in. long. White or Vernis Martin finish. Given free with $10 worth of Products.*



Couch No. 7076. *Hardwood frame, with embossed moulding extending full length; 30 in. wide and 74 in. long. Body has hand-tied spring construction. Upholstered in velour. Given with only $10 worth of our Guaranteed Products.*